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Fifth Committee

Summary record of the 19th meeting

Held at Headquarters, New York, on Tuesday, 8 December 2015, at 10 a.m.

Chair: Mr. Bhattarai (Chair) (Nepal)
 Chair of the Advisory Committee on Administrative
 and Budgetary Questions: Mr. Ruiz Massieu

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15-21644 (E)



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Agenda item 160: Financing of the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (*continued*)

Agenda item 114: Appointments to fill vacancies in subsidiary organs and other appointments (*continued*)

(c) Confirmation of the appointment of members of the Investments Committee

The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Agenda Item 134: Proposed programme budget for the biennium 2016-2017 (continued)

Revised estimates resulting from the decisions contained in General Assembly resolution 69/262, entitled "Development of an international legally binding instrument under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea on the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction" (A/70/7/Add.25 and A/70/543)

Programme budget implications of draft resolution IX contained in the report of the Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples for 2015 (A/70/7/Add.24; A/C.5/70/4)

Programme budget implications of draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.45: Developments in the field of information and telecommunications in the context of international security (A/70/7/Add.26; A/C.5/70/10)

1. **Mr. Huisman** (Director, Programme Planning and Budget Division), introducing the Secretary-General's report on the revised estimates resulting from the decisions contained in General Assembly resolution 69/292, entitled "Development of an international legally binding instrument under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea on the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction" (A/70/543), said that the implementation of paragraphs 1 (a), (b) and (c) of resolution 69/262 would entail an additional appropriation of \$670,000 under section 2, General Assembly and Economic and Social Council affairs and conference management, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2016-2017, representing a charge against the contingency fund.

2. Introducing the Secretary-General's statement of programme budget implications (A/C.5/70/4) of draft resolution IX contained in the report of the Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples for 2015 (A/70/23), he said that the terms of paragraphs 18

and 19 of the draft resolution would entail an additional appropriation of \$269,000 under section 2, General Assembly and Economic and Social Council affairs and conference management, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2016-2017, representing a charge against the contingency fund.

3. Introducing the Secretary-General's statement of programme budget implications of draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.45: Developments in the field of information and telecommunications in the context of international security (A/C.5/70/10), he said that the terms of paragraph 5 of the draft resolution would entail additional appropriations of \$565,000 under section 2, General Assembly and Economic and Social Council affairs and conference management, and \$764,000 under section 4, Disarmament, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2016-2017, representing a charge against the contingency fund.

4. **Mr. Ruiz Massieu** (Chair of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions), introducing the report of the Advisory Committee on the revised estimates resulting from the decisions contained in General Assembly resolution 69/292 (A/70/7/Add.25), said that the Advisory Committee recommended approval of the additional appropriation proposed by the Secretary-General. It also recommended that the Secretary-General should be requested to provide, on a routine basis, comprehensive information on the activities through which the requests of the General Assembly were implemented, as well as on the related requirements and financial implications, with a clear breakdown of the requirements for which a provision was included in the proposed programme budget and those for which a new appropriation was proposed. The Advisory Committee further recommended that the Secretary-General should be requested to provide the General Assembly with information on the unified methodology and coherent process that was being developed for updating costings related to the processing of official documents at all duty stations, as well as details of the unit rates to be applied at each duty station.

5. Introducing the report of the Advisory Committee on the programme budget implications (A/70/7/Add.24) of draft resolution IX contained in the report of the Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the

Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples for 2015 (A/70/23), he said that the Advisory Committee recommended a reduction of \$21,300 in the travel resources requested, relating to the travel of two Secretariat staff members. In addition, the Advisory Committee had been informed of a reduction of \$20,000 in the provision for local interpreters, owing to a miscalculation. The Advisory Committee therefore recommended that the Fifth Committee should inform the General Assembly that, should the Assembly adopt draft resolution IX, an additional appropriation of \$227,700 would be required under section 2, General Assembly and Economic and Social Council affairs and conference management, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2016-2017, representing a charge against the contingency fund.

6. Introducing the report of the Advisory Committee on the programme budget implications of draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.45 (A/70/7/Add.26), he said that the activities to be undertaken by the Secretary-General with the assistance of a group of governmental experts, to be established in 2016 on the basis of equitable geographical distribution, would entail an additional appropriation in the amount of \$1,329,500. The Advisory Committee recommended a reduction of \$8,000 in the amount of \$50,000 proposed for consultancy services, noting that similar services had been provided for the biennium 2014-2015 at a cost of \$42,000. The Advisory Committee recommended that the Fifth Committee should inform the General Assembly that, should it adopt draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.45, additional appropriations of \$565,500 and \$756,000 would be required under section 2, General Assembly and Economic and Social Council affairs and conference management, and section 4, Disarmament, respectively, representing charges against the contingency fund.

Estimates in respect of special political missions, good offices and other political initiatives authorized by the General Assembly and/or the Security Council (A/70/7/Add.10 and A/70/348)

United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (A/70/7/Add.15 and A/348/Add.5)

7. **Mr. Huisman** (Director, Programme Planning and Budget Division), introducing the chapeau of the reports of the Secretary-General on estimates in respect of special political missions, good offices and other political initiatives authorized by the General

Assembly and/or the Security Council (A/70/348), said that the budget proposals for the 36 special political missions covered in the seven addenda to the chapeau document amounted to \$571.4 million, representing some 50.8 per cent of the provision of \$1.1 billion for special political missions included under Section 3, Political affairs, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2016-2017.

8. The budget proposals for the 11 missions grouped under cluster I: special and personal envoys and special advisers of the Secretary General amounted to \$38.3 million, while the proposed requirements for the 15 missions under cluster II: sanctions monitoring teams, groups and panels amounted to \$39.6 million. The proposals relating to the Office of the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Yemen under cluster I and to the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) — United Nations Joint Investigative Mechanism under cluster II had been presented in separate addenda, as had those relating to the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) and the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI). The proposals for the eight missions under cluster III: United Nations offices, peacebuilding support offices, integrated offices and commissions amounted to \$190.1 million, while the proposed resources for UNAMA and UNAMI amounted to \$183.3 million and \$120.1 million, respectively.

9. The proposed number of civilian personnel for 2016 amounted to 3,648 positions, a reduction of 92 positions from 2015, reflecting the discontinuation of 90 positions under the United Nations Electoral Observation Mission in Burundi (MENUB) and a net reduction of two positions under ongoing missions. Elements included in the chapeau, such as summaries of the factors contributing to variances between the appropriations and projected expenditures for the biennium 2014-2015 and between approved resources for 2015 and proposed resources for 2016, reflected efforts to improve the format and presentation of budgets for special political missions.

10. Introducing the Secretary-General's report on the proposed resource requirements for 2016 for UNAMI (A/70/348/Add.5), he said that the Mission's mandate had been extended until 31 July 2016 by Security Council resolution 2233 (2015), in which the Council had expressed concern regarding the situation of more than three million internally displaced persons and

refugees, the human rights abuses committed against women and girls by Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) and the destruction by ISIL of cultural heritage in Iraq. The Council had also welcomed the recommendation of the Secretary-General to revise and prioritize the tasks of UNAMI. UNAMI had undertaken to address the revised priorities in consultation with the Government of Iraq, taking into account its needs and the evolving situation. The proposed resource requirements for UNAMI for 2016, at \$120 million, represented a decrease of \$16 million from 2015; the related proposed staffing complement amounted to 879 positions, a reduction of 21 positions from 2015.

11. **Mr. Ruiz Massieu** (Chair of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions), introducing the report of the Advisory Committee on the chapeau of the reports of the Secretary-General on estimates in respect of special political missions, good offices and other political initiatives authorized by the General Assembly and/or the Security Council (A/70/7/Add.10), recalled that, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 69/264, a preliminary biennial provision of \$1,130.4 million for special political missions had been included in the proposed programme budget for 2016-2017, later reduced by \$6 million as part of a net reduction of \$30 million stemming from efficiencies distributed across programme support components. Upon request for a breakdown of the reduction proposed for special political missions, the Advisory Committee had been informed that the reduction could not be broken down by mission. It was nevertheless of the view that the proposed reduction should have been justified. Moreover, as experience had demonstrated the impossibility of making precise predictions about resource levels for such missions, the level of reduction reflected in the Secretary-General's projections might prove optimistic.

12. For the 35 missions covered in the first six addenda to the chapeau of the Secretary-General's report (A/70/348), the Secretary-General proposed a total of 3,621 civilian positions, a net reduction of 29 positions from 2015. The reduction reflected decreases of 60 positions under UNAMA, 21 positions under UNAMI and eight positions under the United Nations Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL), partially offset by increases of 35 positions under the United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia (UNSOM); 14 positions

under the United Nations Regional Office for Central Africa (UNOCA); five positions under the Office of the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Yemen; four positions under the United Nations Integrated Peace-Building Office in Guinea-Bissau (UNIOGBIS); one position under the Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator for Lebanon (UNSCOL); and one position under the United Nations Office for West Africa (UNOWA.) The comments and recommendations of the Advisory Committee on the proposed staffing requirements for specific missions were contained in its related reports (A/70/7/Add.11, A/70/7/Add.12, A/70/7/Add.13, A/70/7/Add.14, A/70/7/Add.15 and A/70/7/Add.16.)

13. A single vacancy rate had been applied in estimating staff requirements for 2016 for special political missions. Given the persistently long recruitment timelines for filling newly established posts, the Advisory Committee believed that a different budgetary treatment was required in respect of new and continuing posts and recommended that the General Assembly should request the Secretary-General to apply different vacancy rates for new positions in the estimates for 2016 for special political missions, in line with the methodology used for posts and positions established for the programme budget.

14. With regard to the costs and benefits of the Kuwait Joint Support Office, the Secretary-General indicated that the establishment of the Office had enabled the Organization to realize savings under personnel-related costs as a result of lower salaries and common staff costs in Kuwait compared with Afghanistan and Iraq. However, for 2016, the Secretary-General proposed the return of the planning and budget functions for UNAMA from Kuwait to Kabul and the relocation of most support functions for UNAMI from Kuwait to Iraq. The Advisory Committee questioned the repeated transfer of functions back and forth between Afghanistan, Iraq and Kuwait within a relatively short period of time, with financial implications arising from each transfer. It recalled its previous concerns with respect to the lack of clarity regarding the structures, functions and capacity of the UNAMA and UNAMI support offices in Kuwait and the Kuwait Joint Support Office. The Advisory Committee would request the Board of Auditors to review the costs and benefits of the Support Office.

15. The Secretary-General had indicated that the proposed vehicle holdings of several political missions

for 2016 varied significantly from the standard allocation, both in nominal terms and as a percentage of the standard allocation. Noting the lack of policy guidelines covering vehicle holdings by special political missions at different categories of duty station, the Advisory Committee recommended that the General Assembly should request the Secretary-General to develop such guidelines, taking into consideration the mandate, size and operational requirements of individual missions, and to report thereon in the proposed budget for 2017. Lastly, while it noted the improvements in the format and presentation of the proposed budget estimates in respect of special political missions, the Advisory Committee believed that the presentation of information could be further improved.

16. Introducing the report of the Advisory Committee on the proposed resource requirements for 2016 for UNAMI (A/70/7/Add.15), he noted that the planning assumptions for those requirements drew on the findings of a strategic assessment mission conducted in April 2015. The Advisory Committee recommended that the proposed resource requirements for civilian personnel should be reduced to reflect the application of a separate vacancy factor for newly established posts. It also welcomed the consolidation of similar or overlapping functions, such as the merging of the Acquisition Management Section with the Central Warehouse Section, and looked forward to receiving, in the Secretary-General's next report, information on efficiencies achieved and lessons learned in that context. The Advisory Committee believed that the operations of other special political missions might benefit from a similar consolidation of functions.

17. With respect to air operations, the Advisory Committee had requested detailed flight occupancy information on the Mission's regularly scheduled flights in 2015 in order to ascertain utilization rates, but had not received that information. It therefore recommended that the General Assembly should request the Secretary-General to commission the Office of Internal Oversight Services to include an operational audit of UNAMI air operations in its audit programme for 2016.

18. Lastly, the Advisory Committee recommended against the transfer of the resident auditor functions of UNAMI and UNAMA from section 3, Political affairs, to section 30, Internal oversight, of the proposed programme budget for 2016-2017, as well as the

merging of the Resident Auditor Offices of the two missions into a single office in Kuwait. Should the General Assembly endorse those recommendations, the Advisory Committee recommended that the four positions located in the UNAMI Resident Audit Office should be retained to provide internal audit services in the Mission.

19. **Ms. Tan** (Singapore), speaking on behalf of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), said that ASEAN reaffirmed its support for the Advisory Committee's recommendations concerning funding and backstopping arrangements for special political missions, including the creation of a separate account aligned with the budgetary cycle for peacekeeping operations. It reiterated its call for Member States to set aside their political differences and develop a holistic solution to funding and backstopping that would best suit the needs of special political missions.

20. **Ms. Pereira Sotomayor** (Ecuador), speaking on behalf of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC), emphasized the critical role of special political missions, with their increasingly multidimensional mandates, in conflict prevention and resolution and sustainable peacebuilding. As they were tied to the regular budget, the current funding and backstopping arrangements for those missions could not accommodate the unique and volatile nature of peace and security mandates and hindered their implementation. Many stakeholders, including the Secretary-General, the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions, the High-level Independent Panel on United Nations Peace Operations and the Advisory Group of Experts on the Review of the Peacebuilding Architecture, had underscored the need to reform those arrangements. Similarly, the Board of Auditors had expressed concern at the negative effect that the funding of special political missions was having on the regular budget, an effect magnified by the considerable growth in the related resource requirements, which would amount to over 20 per cent of the regular budget of the Organization for the biennium 2016-2017. The Board's concern could be largely addressed through the adoption of the comprehensive reform proposed in 2011. In order to enhance the efficiency, transparency and fairness of the budgetary process, CELAC reiterated its support for the establishment of a separate account for special political missions that would be budgeted, funded and reported on annually with a

financial period of 1 July to 30 June and financed on the same terms as peacekeeping operations, together with an adequate backstopping provision.

21. The current session of the General Assembly provided a valuable opportunity to overcome the deadlock on the reform of funding arrangements for special political missions. Member States, particularly those with special responsibilities, must engage constructively in order to allow the Fifth Committee to take immediate action on the issue for the benefit of those served by special political missions and to ensure the functioning of the Organization's peace and security pillar.

22. **Mr. Kishimori** (Japan) reiterated his delegation's support for the mandates of special political missions. Given the broad range of demands in the field of peace and security and severe fiscal constraints faced by Member States, a balance must be struck between the Organization's various peace and security instruments, including special political missions and peacekeeping missions, to ensure that their comparative advantages were fully utilized. Such a balance would entail timely and smooth transitions between instruments, as well as a thorough transition strategy, to ensure optimal use of Member States' limited resources.

23. His delegation underscored the need for enhanced budgetary transparency to improve Member States' understanding of the budget proposals for special political missions. He concurred with the Advisory Committee that expected accomplishments and indicators of achievement could be improved to better reflect what could realistically be achieved by each mission and the activities for which each mission could be held accountable during the performance period. There was a need for enhanced accountability, including clear mandates, well-conducted operations and clearly defined timelines.

24. Taking into account the resources for the OPCW-United Nations Joint Investigative Mechanism, the total proposed budget allocation for special political missions for 2016 amounted to \$571,352,500. Overall resources for special political missions for 2016-2017 must not exceed the total of \$1,124 million set out in the proposed programme budget; to that end, his delegation would examine the Secretary-General's proposals to determine the scope for more efficient resource utilization.

25. While it acknowledged the concerns expressed by some delegations with regard to current funding and backstopping arrangements, his delegation was not convinced of the need to establish a separate account for special political missions, as such a measure would potentially undermine the Organization's fiscal discipline and result in an increase in the overall budget.

26. **Mr. Pedersen** (Norway), speaking also on behalf of Switzerland, said that special political missions constituted a diverse spectrum of peace operations that had become indispensable for the achievement of political settlements to conflicts, conflict prevention, mediation and peacebuilding. The number and complexity of those missions and the conflicts that they addressed had increased considerably, as had the corresponding share of the regular budget, now over 20 per cent, over the past fifteen years.

27. Given the increasing challenges on the ground, it was regrettable that the Secretariat had not been adequately equipped to provide funding and backstopping for special political missions. Similarly, the deferral, since 2011, of consideration of options to increase the effectiveness and efficiency of special political missions, enhance transparency and accountability, avoid duplication and facilitate oversight was unsustainable. Flexible access to funds for backstopping, with annual appropriations, was essential to enable the Secretariat to ensure the effective delivery of mandates. To that end, the recommendations in the report of the Advisory Committee on the review of arrangements for funding and backstopping special political missions (A/66/7/Add.21, para. 85), which had been endorsed by the High-level Independent Panel on United Nations Peace Operations and the Advisory Group of Experts on the Review of the Peacebuilding Architecture, provided a sound basis for reforming funding and backstopping arrangements. Although the two delegations were open to alternative proposals, they stressed the difficulty of reconciling a programme budget designed for predictable resource allocation with the volatility of the requirements for special political missions, given their changing mandates.

28. The good offices, prevention and mediation role of the United Nations was more crucial than ever, as evidenced by, *inter alia*, its work in the Syrian Arab Republic, Yemen, Libya and Iraq and the work of the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for the Sahel

and the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Sudan and South Sudan. Greater investment in political solutions was essential, and the Secretariat must be provided with effective tools to fulfil the mandates entrusted to it by Member States.

29. **Mr. Al-Khalidy** (Iraq) said that, while his delegation appreciated the effort that had gone into producing the reports of the Secretary-General (A/70/348/Add.5) and of the Advisory Committee (A/70/7/Add.15) on the proposed resource requirements for UNAMI and was cognizant of the mounting burden on those responsible for their preparation, it nonetheless wished to emphasize the importance of the timely issuance of reports in order to allow Member States sufficient time to review them and hold in-depth consultations. His delegation was grateful to those Member States that had contributed to the funding of UNAMI and strongly supported its continued presence in Iraq. To that end, his Government would ensure that it was provided with optimal facilities and services to ensure the effective delivery of its mandates.

30. **Ms. Aşık** (Turkey) emphasized the Organization's increasing reliance on special political missions to address progressively complex and unpredictable security challenges against a backdrop of rapidly deteriorating peace and security conditions. The number of staff on the ground and volume of financial resources allocated to special political missions had increased exponentially: in 2000-2001, an initial appropriation of \$86 million had been approved for special political missions, representing 6 per cent of the budget for the biennium, compared with a revised appropriation of \$1.2 billion for 2010-2011, accounting for 20 per cent of the budget for the biennium. Although the current financing arrangements had proved adequate in the past, they were no longer optimal or sustainable: new financial mechanisms were needed to accommodate the volatility of resource requirements for special political missions. A special and separate account for special political missions budgeted, funded and reported on an annual basis seemed to be the only viable option.

Agenda item 143: Administration of justice at the United Nations (*continued*) (A/C.5/70/L.6)

Draft resolution A/C.5/70/L.6: Administration of justice at the United Nations

31. *Draft resolution A/C.5/70/L.6 was adopted.*

Agenda item 160: Financing of the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (*continued*) (A/C.5/70/L.7)

Draft resolution A/C.5/70/L.7: Financing of the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali

32. *Draft resolution A/C.5/70/L.7 was adopted.*

Agenda item 114: Appointments to fill vacancies in subsidiary organs and other appointments (*continued*)

(c) **Confirmation of the appointment of members of the Investments Committee** (A/70/103; A/C.5/70/8)

33. **The Chair** drew the Committee's attention to notes by the Secretary-General referring to article 20 of the Regulations of the United Nations Joint Staff Pension Fund and to the need for the General Assembly to confirm the appointment by the Secretary-General of seven persons to fill vacancies on the Investments Committee beginning on 1 January 2016 (A/70/103), and submitting the names of six persons for confirmation of appointment by the General Assembly for a one-year term of office beginning on 1 January 2016 (A/C.5/70/8). The nomination of an additional member to fill the remaining vacancy beginning on 1 January 2016 had been postponed.

34. Since the number of candidates corresponded to the number of vacancies, he took it that the Committee wished to recommend by acclamation that the Assembly should confirm the candidates' appointment.

35. *The Committee recommended by acclamation that the Assembly should confirm the appointment of Mr. Arikawa (Japan), Mr. Dhar (India), Mr. Kirdar (Iraq), Mr. Klein (United States of America), Ms. Mohohlo (Botswana) and Mr. Oliveros (Spain) for a one-year term beginning on 1 January 2016.*

The meeting rose at 11.10 a.m.



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Summary record of the 20th meeting

Held at Headquarters, New York, on Tuesday, 15 December 2015, at 10 a.m.

Chair: Mr. Bhattarai (Chair) (Nepal)
 later: Mr. Castañeda Solares (Vice-Chair) (Guatemala)
 Chair of the Advisory Committee on Administrative
 and Budgetary Questions: Mr. Ruiz Massieu

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*Programme budget implications of draft resolution A/C.4/70/L.9/Rev.1:
 Matters relating to activities under the United Nations Programme on Space
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*Programme budget implications of draft resolution A/C.3/70/L.47: Situation of
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*Programme budget implications of draft resolution A/C.3/70/L.26/Rev.1:
 Rights of indigenous peoples*

*Programme budget implications of draft resolution A/C.3/70/L.39/Rev.1:
 Situation of human rights in Myanmar*

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Programme budget implications of draft resolution A/C.6/70/L.13: Report of the International Law Commission on the work of its sixty-seventh session

Programme budget implications of draft resolution A/70/L.22: Oceans and the law of the sea

Programme budget implications of the amendment (A/70/L.26) to the decision on the work of the Open-ended Working Group on the Fourth Special Session of the General Assembly Devoted to Disarmament recommended in the report of the First Committee on General and complete disarmament (A/70/460)

Revised estimates resulting from the decisions contained in the Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development and the outcome document of the United Nations summit for the adoption of the post-2015 development agenda, entitled "Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development" (continued)

Agenda item 144: Financing of the International Criminal Tribunal for the Prosecution of Persons Responsible for Genocide and Other Serious Violations of International Humanitarian Law Committed in the Territory of Rwanda and Rwandan Citizens Responsible for Genocide and Other Such Violations Committed in the Territory of Neighbouring States between 1 January and 31 December 1994

Agenda item 145: Financing of the International Tribunal for the Prosecution of Persons Responsible for Serious Violations of International Humanitarian Law Committed in the Territory of the Former Yugoslavia since 1991

Agenda item 146: Financing of the International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals

Agenda item 131: Financial reports and audited financial statements, and reports of the Board of Auditors (continued)

The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Agenda item 134: Proposed programme budget for the biennium 2016-2017 (continued)

Estimates in respect of special political missions, good offices and other political initiatives authorized by the General Assembly and/or the Security Council (continued)

Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons — United Nations Joint Investigative Mechanism (A/70/7/Add.17, A/70/348/Add.7 and A/70/348/Add.7/Corr.1)

1. **Ms. Bartsiotas** (Controller), introducing the report of the Secretary-General on the proposed additional resource requirements for 2016 for the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) — United Nations Joint Investigative Mechanism (A/70/348/Add.7 and A/70/348/Add.7/Corr.1), said that the requirements, amounting to just over \$5 million for the period from 1 January to 30 September 2016, would enable implementation of the Mechanism's mandate pursuant to Security Council resolution 2235 (2015), which established the entity for one year with a possibility of extension.

2. Given the need to ensure the Mechanism's full operationalization within a short span of time, its initial activities for the period from October to December 2015 had been funded under the commitment authority of the Secretary-General pursuant to the provisions of General Assembly resolution 68/249 on unforeseen and extraordinary expenses for the biennium 2014-2015 in the amount of just over \$1 million.

3. **Mr. Ruiz Massieu** (Chair of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions), introducing the related report of the Advisory Committee (A/70/7/Add.17), said that the Advisory Committee had been informed that the Mechanism would work independently and report to the Security Council, through the Secretary-General, in accordance with Security Council resolution 2235 (2015). The Advisory Committee recommended approval of the proposed resource requirements, apart from the requirements for one of the General Service positions proposed for establishment in the Planning and Operations Support Office in New York.

Programme budget implications of draft resolution A/C.4/70/L.9/Rev.1: Matters relating to activities under the United Nations Programme on Space Applications in 2016 (A/70/7/Add.27; A/C.5/70/11)

Programme budget implications of draft resolution A/C.3/70/L.47: Situation of human rights in the Syrian Arab Republic (A/70/7/Add.31; A/C.5/70/14)

Programme budget implications of draft resolution A/C.3/70/L.14/Rev.1: Persons with albinism (A/70/7/Add.33; A/C.5/70/15)

Programme budget implications of draft resolution A/C.3/70/L.26/Rev.1: Rights of indigenous peoples (A/70/7/Add.32; A/C.5/70/16)

Programme budget implications of draft resolution A/C.3/70/L.39/Rev.1: Situation of human rights in Myanmar (A/70/7/Add.29; A/C.5/70/12)

Programme budget implications of draft resolution A/C.6/70/L.13: Report of the International Law Commission on the work of its sixty-seventh session (A/70/7/Add.36; A/C.5/70/13)

Programme budget implications of draft resolution A/70/L.22: Oceans and the law of the sea (A/70/7/Add.38; A/C.5/70/17)

Programme budget implications of the amendment (A/70/L.26) to the decision on the work of the Open-ended Working Group on the Fourth Special Session of the General Assembly Devoted to Disarmament recommended in the report of the First Committee on general and complete disarmament (A/70/460) (A/70/7/Add.37; A/C.5/70/18)

Revised estimates resulting from the decisions contained in the Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development and the outcome document of the United Nations summit for the adoption of the post-2015 development agenda, entitled "Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development" (continued)
(A/70/7/Add.39 and A/70/589)

4. **Ms. Bartsiotas** (Controller), introducing the statement submitted by the Secretary-General in accordance with rule 153 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly of the programme budget implications of draft resolution A/C.4/70/L.9/Rev.1: Matters relating to activities under the United Nations Programme on Space Applications in 2016 (A/C.5/70/11), said that the Fourth Committee had agreed to reinstate, for implementation in 2016, four of the activities planned under the United Nations Programme on Space Applications for 2015 that had not been agreed upon by the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space at its fifty-eighth session. As no provisions for the activities had been incorporated in the proposed programme budget for 2016-2017 and the related requirements could not be accommodated without affecting other programmed activities additional requirements in the amount of \$197,800 would need to be included in the proposed programme budget for 2016-2017.

5. Introducing the Secretary-General's statements of the programme budget implications of draft resolution A/C.3/70/L.47: Situation of human rights in the Syrian Arab Republic (A/C.5/70/14), draft resolution A/C.3/70/L.14/Rev.1: Persons with albinism (A/C.5/70/15) and draft resolution A/C.3/70/L.26/Rev.1: Rights of indigenous peoples (A/C.5/70/16), she said that those draft resolutions would entail additional combined resources in the amount of \$152,700 under section 2, General Assembly and Economic and Social Council affairs and conference management, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2016-2017.

6. Introducing the Secretary-General's statement of the programme budget implications of draft resolution A/C.3/70/L.39/Rev.1: Situation of human rights in Myanmar (A/C.5/70/12), she said that the draft resolution would entail additional resource requirements in the amount of \$1.1 million, as proposed in the context of the report of the Secretary-General on estimates in respect of special political

missions (A/70/348/Add.1). If approved, the requirements would be charged against the provision for special political missions under section 3, Political affairs, of the proposed programme budget for 2016-2017.

7. Introducing the Secretary-General's statement of the programme budget implications of draft resolution A/C.6/70/L.13: Report of the International Law Commission on the work of its sixty-seventh session (A/C.5/70/13), she said that the draft resolution would entail additional requirements in the amount of \$232,100 under section 8, Legal affairs, to cover travel costs related to the extension of the session from 10 to 12 weeks.

8. Introducing the Secretary-General's statement of the programme budget implications of draft resolution A/70/L.22: Oceans and the law of the sea (A/C.5/70/17), she said that the draft resolution, by which the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to address the immediate working space needs of the Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf and to make proposals in the context of the 2016-2017 budget to strengthen the capacity of the Division for Ocean Affairs, would entail additional requirements totalling \$968,900 net of staff assessment under section 8, Legal affairs, and section 29D, Office of Central Support Services.

9. Introducing the Secretary-General's statement of the programme budget implications (A/C.5/70/18) of the amendment (A/70/L.26) to the decision on the work of the Open-ended Working Group on the Fourth Special Session of the General Assembly Devoted to Disarmament recommended in the report of the First Committee on general and complete disarmament (A/70/460), she said that the draft decision would entail additional resource requirements amounting to \$392,900 under section 2, General Assembly and Economic and Social Council affairs and conference management.

10. Introducing the Secretary-General's report on the revised estimates resulting from the decisions contained in the Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development and the outcome document of the United Nations summit for the adoption of the post-2015 development agenda, entitled "Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development" (A/70/589), she said that additional resource

requirements for the biennium 2016-2017 in the amount of just over \$15 million were proposed for the immediate implementation of the mandates called for under General Assembly resolutions 69/313 and 70/1. When those resolutions were adopted, the Secretary-General had advised the General Assembly that more time was required to assess the related budgetary implications and that revised estimates would be submitted at the main part of the seventieth session. Additional resources were now being sought to implement those activities for which clear and specific mandates had been established by the General Assembly. The Secretary-General's report (A/70/589) had been finalized following a meeting of the United Nations Chief Executives Board for Coordination in November 2015, at which the responses of stakeholders from across the United Nations system to the outcome documents had been considered. Pursuant to General Assembly resolution 70/1, the Secretary-General intended to submit a report for the consideration of the Assembly at its resumed seventieth session in preparation for the 2016 meeting of the high-level political forum on sustainable development, at which critical milestones towards coherent, efficient and inclusive follow-up and review would be outlined.

11. **Mr. Ruiz Massieu** (Chair of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions), introducing the report of the Advisory Committee on the programme budget implications of draft resolution A/C.4/70/L.9/Rev.1: Matters relating to activities under the United Nations Programme on Space Applications in 2016 (A/70/7/Add.27), said that the Advisory Committee recommended that the Fifth Committee should inform the General Assembly that, should it adopt the draft resolution, additional resources in the amount of \$197,800 would be required under the proposed programme budget for 2016-2017. The Advisory Committee noted that the language used in the final sentence of paragraph 9 of the Secretary-General's statement (A/C.5/70/11) and in the draft resolution might not be consistent with the Financial Regulations and Rules. The correct interpretation of the Regulations and Rules should be reflected in the Secretary-General's reports to the General Assembly and, in accordance with section VI of General Assembly resolution 45/248 B, the Secretary-General should provide all intergovernmental bodies with the required information regarding procedures for administrative and budgetary matters.

12. Introducing the reports of the Advisory Committee on the programme budget implications of draft resolution A/C.3/70/L.47: Situation of human rights in the Syrian Arab Republic (A/70/7/Add.31), draft resolution A/C.3/70/L.14/Rev.1: Persons with albinism (A/70/7/Add.33) and draft resolution A/C.3/70/L.26/Rev.1: Rights of indigenous peoples (A/70/7/Add.32), he said that, for each of the three draft resolutions, the General Assembly had been requested to approve resource requirements in the amount of \$50,900 to cover the cost of conference services. The Advisory Committee recommended that the General Assembly should request the Secretary-General to make every effort to absorb the additional requirements and that, if they could not be absorbed, the related expenditures should be reflected in the performance reports for the biennium.

13. Introducing the report of the Advisory Committee on the programme budget implications of draft resolution A/C.3/70/L.39/Rev.1: Situation of human rights in Myanmar (A/70/7/Add.29), he said that the Advisory Committee recommended that the General Assembly should approve the proposed resource requirements of \$1.1 million for the office of the Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on Myanmar.

14. Introducing the report of the Advisory Committee on the programme budget implications of draft resolution A/C.6/70/L.13: Report of the International Law Commission on the work of its sixty-seventh session (A/70/7/Add.36), he said that, in the Advisory Committee's first reports on the proposed programme budgets for the bienniums 2014-2015 and 2016-2017, it had recommended that the full amount of resources required for sessions of the International Law Commission of up to 12 weeks should be included in the overall proposed allocation for section 8, Legal affairs. It therefore recommended that the General Assembly should request the Secretary-General to absorb the proposed additional requirements of \$232,100 under section 8 of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2016-2017.

15. Introducing the report of the Advisory Committee on the programme budget implications of draft resolution A/70/L.22: Oceans and the law of the sea (A/70/7/Add.38), he said that the Advisory Committee recommended that the General Assembly should approve the proposed additional resource requirements totalling \$968,900, which would provide for the establishment of two new Professional posts, one P-3

and one P-4, to strengthen the capacity of the Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea, and of the Office of Legal Affairs, and should apply the separate vacancy rate of 50 per cent for the new posts. While the Advisory Committee understood the special technical needs of the Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf, it stressed that the proposed requirements in the amount of \$147,000 under section 29D should be prioritized.

16. Regarding the new P-3 post requested to respond to the increased number of requests to the Division for additional outputs and the servicing of meetings, the Secretary-General should have informed the General Assembly of the additional resource requirements in his report on the revised estimates resulting from the decisions contained in General Assembly resolution 69/292 (A/70/543). Equally, the additional resources requested for improvements to address the Commission's immediate working space needs should have been requested in the context of the proposed programme budget rather than through a General Assembly resolution with financial implications.

17. Introducing the Advisory Committee's report (A/70/7/Add.37) on the programme budget implications of the amendment (A/70/L.26) to the decision recommended in the report of the First Committee on general and complete disarmament (A/70/460), he said that the proposed additional resources would cover conference-servicing requirements for two additional substantive sessions of five days each of the Open-ended Working Group on the Fourth Special Session of the General Assembly Devoted to Disarmament. The Advisory Committee recommended that the Fifth Committee should inform the General Assembly that, should it adopt the draft decision, additional resources in the amount of \$392,900 would be required under the proposed programme budget for 2016-2017.

18. Introducing the Advisory Committee's report on the revised estimates resulting from the decisions contained in the Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development and the outcome document of the United Nations summit for the adoption of the post-2015 development agenda (A/70/7/Add.39), he said that the late submission of the report of the Secretary-General (A/70/589) had prevented the Advisory Committee from properly examining the Secretary-General's proposals and providing observations and

recommendations to the General Assembly. In order to enable implementation of the related activities from the beginning of January 2016, the Advisory Committee recommended that the General Assembly should authorize the Secretary-General to enter into commitments of no more than \$7,547,300 in the first year of the biennium 2016-2017. With the approval of the General Assembly, the Advisory Committee would revert to its consideration of the Secretary-General's proposals at its next session.

19. **Mr. Davidson** (South Africa), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, recalled the Group's concerns at the delay in the preparation of the revised estimates for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda and noted the efforts undertaken by the Secretary-General to provide partial estimates at the main part of the session. The Group supported the mandate of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs and its leading role in the implementation of both outcome documents.

20. Regional efforts and action by the United Nations system to ensure an enabling domestic environment were essential for the implementation of both frameworks. To that end, the Group was concerned that the revised estimates did not constitute a comprehensive proposal that fully addressed the needs of Member States, as they did not adequately account for the incorporation of regional consultations and perspectives in the preparatory work for follow-up to and review of the financing for development outcomes, and review of the 2030 Agenda at the high-level political forum on sustainable development, as provided for in General Assembly resolutions 69/313 and 70/1. Regional commissions must be actively involved in the preparations for both review processes, and a comprehensive proposal indicating the budgetary implications should be provided expeditiously.

21. **Mr. de Preter** (Observer for the European Union), speaking also on behalf of the candidate countries Albania, Montenegro and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia; the stabilization and association process country Bosnia and Herzegovina; and, in addition, Ukraine, commended the unprecedented ambition of the 2030 Agenda and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda as providing a global framework for action of which all Member States could be proud. The members of the European Union would contribute to its implementation and to the

strengthening of the related follow-up and review mechanisms.

22. His delegation was nonetheless deeply concerned by the Secretary-General's report, which, contrary to its expectations, did not constitute a comprehensive, system-wide proposal for how the United Nations system would adapt to the 2030 Agenda, including budgetary implications, but was instead the product of a bottom-up, Department of Economic and Social Affairs-centred approach. Moreover, the methodology used was imprecise, requests were not sufficiently substantiated and baselines were unclear. Implementation of the 2030 Agenda would, first and foremost, take place at the country level; the main effort across the United Nations system should therefore be to reprioritize and redeploy resources, avoid duplication and improve coherence and efficiency, a point that was not reflected in the Secretary-General's report. By treating the 2030 Agenda and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda as two largely autonomous processes, the report perpetuated silos. It provided no suggestions for improving coordination of the work of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs or ensuring that integrated Secretariat support was provided for the high-level political forum on sustainable development and the Economic and Social Council, and offered no integrated vision for drawing upon the expertise already available in the Secretariat in following up on the 2030 Agenda.

23. The members of the European Union concurred with the conclusions of the Advisory Committee and stood ready to adopt its recommended approach in order to ensure that the implementation of activities could commence, while acknowledging that further efforts were required to determine how the decisions contained in the 2030 Agenda would be implemented. They looked forward to the issuance of recommendations by the Secretary-General in that regard, in accordance with paragraph 90 of General Assembly resolution 70/1.

24. **Mr. Dettling** (Switzerland), speaking also on behalf of Liechtenstein, said that the 2030 Agenda and Addis Ababa Action Agenda were ground-breaking achievements that provided a global framework and implementation strategy for the realization of sustainable development and eradication of poverty at the national and international levels. It was therefore regrettable that the Secretary-General's report had been

submitted to the Advisory Committee only a few days previously, impeding its ability to consider the proposals. He was concerned that inefficient internal processes and the absence of a strategic approach had contributed to the delay: the Secretary-General should examine the causes for the late submission.

25. The two delegations were not convinced that the proposals in the Secretary-General's report reflected the strategic vision and integrated approach called for by Member States at the third International Conference on Financing for Development and the United Nations summit for the adoption of the post-2015 development agenda. Similarly, the proposals did not reflect adequate efforts on the part of the Secretary-General to abandon old structures and concepts that were unsuited to the challenges that lay ahead and there was no indication that he had seized the opportunity to create mechanisms and platforms to ensure coherent Secretariat support for delivery of the related mandates. He questioned whether the proposals were fully in line with the agreements reached by Member States.

26. The two delegations were committed to the effective implementation of the new global agenda. While they did not object to the commitment authority recommended by the Advisory Committee, they looked forward to providing further guidance at the first part of the resumed session.

27. **Mr. Ko Jae Sin** (Republic of Korea) welcomed the submission of the Secretary-General's report, although its delayed issuance had prevented the Fifth Committee from examining it thoroughly. His delegation emphasized the need for a holistic and coherent approach across the United Nations system to ensure the efficient and effective implementation of the Addis Ababa Action Agenda and the 2030 Agenda: it looked forward to the Secretary-General's blueprint for adapting the system's activities to the requirements of the 2030 Agenda. Given the shared responsibility of stakeholders for implementation of the outcomes, a comprehensive picture of the related funding mechanism and each organization's role should be presented as soon as possible. Additional resource requirements should be minimized through the reallocation of existing resources and realignment of business structures.

28. Cognizant of the urgent need for the Secretariat to prepare for the various activities, particularly

follow-ups and reviews, mandated by the Addis Ababa Action Agenda and the 2030 Agenda, he called for Member States to find financing solutions for the implementation of the related frameworks.

29. **Ms. Fujimoto (Japan)** said that her Government had participated constructively in negotiations on the 2030 Agenda and Addis Ababa Action Agenda and was committed to their implementation. While the outcomes were important milestones for sustainable development, the Secretary-General's call to do more with less should be borne in mind in the context of their implementation, given the limited resources available. Even at first glance, the revised estimates included additional resource requirements that were based on assumptions subject to the consideration of Member States outside the Fifth Committee, in particular with regard to follow-up to and review of the 2030 Agenda, and on interpretations that were inconsistent with the agreements reflected in the outcomes. It was alarming that Member States had not been consulted during preparation of the estimates, which did not appear to take into account the need to redeploy and utilize existing resources available to the Organization, including in the United Nations Development Group. Her delegation would examine the estimates from that perspective. It also regretted that the Secretary-General's report had not been issued until roughly a week prior to the conclusion of the Fifth Committee's deliberations, leaving inadequate time for in-depth discussions, including on the concerns expressed by her delegation.

30. **Mr. Awad (Syrian Arab Republic)** said that, although the Committee's discussions were usually limited to technical matters, his delegation wished to comment on its total rejection of the draft resolution on the situation of human rights in the Syrian Arab Republic (A/C.3/70/L.47), in respect of which the Secretary-General had submitted a statement of programme budget implications. The draft resolution was nothing more than a frantic attempt to pillory his Government, and it was offensive for the sponsors, the Saudi Arabian and Qatari regimes, to speak of such noble ideals as human rights and democracy, which they had never respected either in word or in deed, the concepts being totally alien to their cultures. Anyone who doubted his assertions could go and see the truth of how life was lived in those two countries. The sponsors' objective had been to engage in political extortion in pursuit of narrow interests and to use the

draft resolution as a cheap tool to harm legitimate Governments.

31. His Government rejected the draft resolution chapter and verse, and wished to express a reservation regarding the appropriation of financial resources for its implementation in opposition to the position of the Non-Aligned Movement, which refused to consider draft General Assembly resolutions that singled out its members for interventionist political ends in contravention of the Charter of the United Nations and international law.

32. Recalling the legal principle *nemo dat quod non habet*, he said that it was unacceptable for Member States to adopt a draft resolution on human rights sponsored by Saudi Arabia, which was not a party to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, in contrast to the Syrian Arab Republic, which had become a party in 1969. It was ironic for the Saudi Arabian ruling class to lecture his Government on democracy and human rights when it deprived its own people of participation in parliamentary, political and judicial institutions and denied them the most basic elements of a free and dignified life; neither Saudi Arabia nor Qatar had ever had a constitution or a parliament or freedom for women.

33. The draft resolution was highly politicized. In paragraph 41, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to report on the implementation of the draft resolution by the Syrian authorities within 45 days of its adoption. He wondered what benefit there was in such a request, which would waste time and money, given that the Syrian question was discussed on a daily basis in other forums at the highest levels of the Organization. There was no reason for a financial appropriation, even one as small as the \$50,900 proposed by the Secretary-General in his statement of programme budget implications, to fulfil the requirements of the draft resolution. No one was happy with the adoption of such politicized resolutions and the waste of money, when States were seeking to limit expenditure. It would be better to use resources for the provision of material assistance to the Syrian people rather than for one-upmanship and political blackmail.

34. The Saudi Arabian regime, bloated with money and oil, should be ashamed of requesting such an appropriation, which would have to be met from the contingency fund, when everyone was aware that the

regime had spent millions of dollars to finance armed *takfirist* Wahhabi terrorist groups that violated the human rights of Syrians. The regime was complicit in the continuing suffering in his country and in impeding a peaceful political resolution, thereby undermining the positive momentum generated by the work of the Secretary-General's Special Envoy for Syria, the peace talks in Vienna, and other international efforts. His Government reiterated its commitment to the human rights and fundamental freedoms of its citizens in accordance with the Charter and international law.

35. **Mr. Hanna** (United States of America) said that ambitious action was needed to advance the Addis Ababa Action Agenda and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, through which Member States had embraced a new way of addressing development by building on country commitments and refining the international development architecture, including that of the United Nations. Considered responses were needed to ensure that the agreements yielded results on the ground. His delegation was concerned that the revised estimates pre-empted Member State decisions on follow-up to and review of the agreements. Such presumptions were not an appropriate basis for seeking additional funding.

36. His delegation had understood that coordinated United Nations support for the agreements would be based on a thorough review of United Nations structures by the Secretary-General to ascertain whether the resources currently allocated to the Millennium Development Goals could be channelled into honouring new commitments that built on previous ones. Unfortunately, a business-as-usual approach appeared to have been adopted, since the revised estimates were not based on credible analysis of how to reprioritize resources or a coherent assessment of the ways in which the United Nations could best support Member States and stakeholders. The Advisory Committee had addressed those concerns in its recommendations on a possible way forward.

37. **Mr. Ameen** (Saudi Arabia), speaking in exercise of the right of reply, said that the Committee's work was indeed technical rather than political, and his delegation deplored the baseless allegations made against his country by the representative of the Syrian Arab Republic, which were no more than a desperate attempt to divert attention from the Syrian regime's ignoble and barbaric crimes against its own people.

38. **Mr. Awad** (Syrian Arab Republic), speaking in exercise of the right of reply, said that he had expected the representative of Saudi Arabia to have nothing to say in response to his words, all of which had been true: the draft resolution ran counter to the position of the Non-Aligned Movement and Saudi Arabia was not a party to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. His comments had been based on United Nations reports and resolutions. Anyone who doubted his assertions regarding the Saudi Arabian regime's support for terrorism could corroborate them by consulting the lists maintained by the Security Council on such groups as Al-Qaida, the Taliban and Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant.

39. **Mr. Castañeda Solares** (Guatemala), *Vice-Chair*, took the Chair.

Agenda item 144: Financing of the International Criminal Tribunal for the Prosecution of Persons Responsible for Genocide and Other Serious Violations of International Humanitarian Law Committed in the Territory of Rwanda and Rwandan Citizens Responsible for Genocide and Other Such Violations Committed in the Territory of Neighbouring States between 1 January and 31 December 1994 (A/70/448, A/70/553 and A/70/600)

Agenda item 145: Financing of the International Tribunal for the Prosecution of Persons Responsible for Serious Violations of International Humanitarian Law Committed in the Territory of the Former Yugoslavia since 1991 (A/70/397, A/70/554 and A/70/600)

Agenda item 146: Financing of the International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals (A/70/378, A/70/558 and A/70/600)

40. **Mr. Huisman** (Director, Programme Planning and Budget Division), introducing the Secretary-General's report on the budget for the International Criminal Tribunal for the Prosecution of Persons Responsible for Genocide and Other Serious Violations of International Humanitarian Law Committed in the Territory of Rwanda and Rwandan Citizens Responsible for Genocide and Other Such Violations Committed in the Territory of Neighbouring States between 1 January and 31 December 1994, for the biennium 2016-2017: Liquidation (A/70/448), said that the proposed budget indicated the resources required for the period from 1 January to 31 May 2016. The

liquidation phase would include the disposal of assets, the repatriation of staff members and their families, the settlement of liabilities, the dismantling of temporary structures, and the repair and handover of rented premises. The resources required amounted to \$2.5 million before recosting and covered 43 staffing positions.

41. Introducing the Secretary-General's second performance report on the budget of the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda for the biennium 2014-2015 (A/70/553), he said that the proposed final appropriation was \$169.3 million, \$74.5 million more than the revised appropriation, mainly as a result of the inclusion of provisions for after-service health insurance and for the pensions of judges and their eligible family members, in a total amount of \$63.3 million.

42. Introducing the Secretary-General's report on the budget for the International Tribunal for the Prosecution of Persons Responsible for Serious Violations of International Humanitarian Law Committed in the Territory of the Former Yugoslavia since 1991, for the biennium 2016-2017 (A/70/397), he said that the budget proposal, expected to be the last for the Tribunal, took into account the completion of judicial proceedings and the transfer of functions, records and archives to the International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals. The overall resources required amounted to \$113.6 million before recosting, \$87.7 million, or 43.6 per cent, less than the revised appropriation for 2014-2015. The proposal included the retention of 328 temporary posts until December 2016 and 97 temporary posts until December 2017, with the abolishment of 282 posts, or 74.4 per cent of the current total of 379.

43. Introducing the Secretary-General's second performance report on the budget of the International Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia for the biennium 2014-2015 (A/70/554), he said that anticipated final expenditure amounted to \$191.1 million, \$10.2 million less than the revised appropriation, mainly owing to the strengthening of the dollar against the euro.

44. Introducing the Secretary-General's report on the budget for the International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals for the biennium 2016-2017 (A/70/378), he said that the Mechanism would continue to implement its mandated functions, assume responsibility for appeals proceedings in the four cases

currently being tried by the International Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia, monitor referred cases of the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda, acquire additional transitional functions as the closure of the Tribunals approached, and establish its independent administration. The proposed resources amounted to \$140.9 million before recosting, \$25.4 million more than the revised appropriation for 2014-2015. The establishment of 51 new posts, including 48 posts at the Arusha branch, the redeployment of one post from The Hague to Arusha, and the establishment of two posts in The Hague and one post in New York, would increase the number of temporary posts from 126 to 177.

45. Introducing the Secretary-General's second performance report on the budget of the International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals for the biennium 2014-2015 (A/70/558), he said that the proposed final appropriation was \$71.6 million, \$43.9 million less than the revised appropriation, because of a lower-than-anticipated level of judicial activity owing to the non-arrest of two fugitives who had been indicted by the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda and whose trial had been scheduled for the biennium 2014-2015, and the postponement of appeals in two cases in The Hague because of delays in the trial proceedings.

46. **Mr. Ruiz Massieu** (Chair of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions), introducing the related report of the Advisory Committee (A/70/600), said that the Advisory Committee recommended that the General Assembly should approve the final appropriations proposed in the Secretary-General's second performance reports on the budgets of the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda, the International Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia and the International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals for the biennium 2014-2015.

47. With regard to the budget for the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda for the biennium 2016-2017, the Advisory Committee recommended reductions in the proposed staffing of the liquidation team, in view of the functions relating to some of the proposed positions and existing capacity.

48. With respect to the Secretary-General's report on the budget for the International Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia for the biennium 2016-2017, the Advisory Committee recommended reductions in non-post

requirements and reiterated that the Tribunal should complete its mandate in a timely manner.

49. With regard to the Secretary-General's report on the budget for the International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals for the biennium 2016-2017, the Advisory Committee recommended against the establishment of a temporary P-3 post in New York and made other recommendations related to non-post requirements.

50. **Mr. Davidson** (South Africa), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, said that the Group appreciated the quality of the reports of the Board of Auditors on the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (A/70/5/Add.13), the International Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia since 1991 (A/70/5/Add.14 and A/70/5/Add.14/Corr.1) and the International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals (A/70/5/Add.15). The Board should continue to issue separate reports for the entities, as requested by the Group, in particular for the final accounts of the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda. All recommendations by the Board should be implemented in a timely fashion.

51. With regard to the Secretary-General's second performance reports on the three entities, the final appropriations were lower than the revised appropriations, except in the case of the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda. The Group would seek further information on the variances in informal consultations.

52. With regard to the Secretary-General's report on the budget for the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda for the biennium 2016-2017, the Group was mindful of the challenges faced in similar liquidation processes and would scrutinize the proposed resources. Institutional memory must be maintained, and the Secretary-General should take additional measures to protect records, information and inventory during liquidation.

53. The Group noted the staffing reduction target proposed in the Secretary-General's report on the budget for the International Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia for the biennium 2016-2017. It was concerned about implementation of the completion strategy, which was lagging behind the liquidation of the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda, and would seek further information regarding the planning assumptions and the ability of the International

Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia to complete its mandate in a timely manner. It would also request information on how the imbalance in geographical representation at the International Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia had been addressed.

54. With regard to the Secretary-General's report on the budget for the International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals for the biennium 2016-2017, the Group noted the increase of \$140.9 million in resources from 2014-2015 would seek further information regarding travel, including by the Registrar between Arusha and The Hague, and would examine the double-hatting arrangement between the Mechanism and the International Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia, as well as staff costs at the two entities. The Secretary-General should as a matter of priority address the absorption, at the Arusha branch of the Mechanism, of General Service staff of the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda, including security staff. The Group would request updates on the matter, and on the construction in Arusha, in informal consultations.

55. **Mr. Kisoka** (United Republic of Tanzania), speaking on behalf of the Group of African States, said that the recommendations of the Board of Auditors regarding delays in closing the activities of the International Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia, the use of out-of-date statistics for the transfer of the archives and records of the Tribunal to the International Residual Mechanism, delays in preparations for the transfer, and updates on the International Public Sector Accounting Standards and other financial indicators at the Mechanism, should be implemented in a timely manner. The Group would seek clarification of the issues raised by the Board.

56. The Group noted the proposed final appropriations of \$432.04 million in the second performance reports on the budgets of the three entities for the biennium 2014-2015, \$20.3 million less than the revised appropriations. The Group would seek clarification of budget performance as it related to mandate implementation, including implementation of the completion strategy at the International Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia and the liquidation process at the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda, as well as the transition to the Mechanism and national jurisdictions.

57. With respect to the Secretary-General's reports on the budgets for the three entities for the biennium 2016-2017, the Group would seek clarification of the request for resources for the liquidation of the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda and for the transitional functions acquired by the Mechanism. It disagreed with the Advisory Committee regarding the budget for the liquidation of the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda. The liquidation should be carefully handled to ensure that the work of the Tribunal was preserved. Regarding the Mechanism, the construction of the new facilities at the Arusha branch should be completed to allow timely occupancy and avoid cost overruns. The Group would make proposals to improve recruitment, procurement and oversight at the Mechanism, as well as in respect of the double-hatting arrangement at the Tribunals and Mechanism. He trusted that the United Nations system would absorb former staff of the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda.

58. **Mr. Khalizov** (Russian Federation) said that his delegation was concerned about the delays in the completion of the activities of the International Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia, particularly compared with the liquidation of the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda, scheduled for May 2016. The proposed budget for the biennium 2016-2017 should be the last for the International Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia. Strict adherence to the rules governing financial and human resource management was essential during the completion of activities. Duplication and the uneconomical use of budget resources would be unacceptable during the transfer of functions to the International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals. His delegation would draw attention to such matters, and others related to the completion of the work of the Tribunals, in informal consultations.

Agenda item 131: Financial reports and audited financial statements, and reports of the Board of Auditors (continued) (A/C.5/70/L.8)

Draft resolution A/C.5/70/L.8: Financial reports and audited financial statements, and reports of the Board of Auditors

59. *Draft resolution A/C.5/70/L.8 was adopted.*

The meeting rose at 11.35 a.m.



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Fifth Committee

Summary record of the 21st meeting

Held at Headquarters, New York, on Wednesday, 16 December 2015, at 10 a.m.

Chair: Mr. Bhattarai (Nepal)
*Chair of the Advisory Committee on Administrative
 and Budgetary Questions: Mr. Ruiz Massieu*

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Agenda item 146: Financing of the International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals (*continued*)

Agenda item 133: Programme budget for the biennium 2014-2015 (*continued*)

Second performance report on the programme budget for the biennium 2014-2015

Capital master plan

The meeting was called to order at 10.15 a.m.

Agenda Item 134: Proposed programme budget for the biennium 2016-2017 (continued)

Request for a subvention to the Residual Special Court for Sierra Leone (A/70/7/Add.30 and A/70/565)

Revised estimates resulting from resolutions and decisions adopted by the Human Rights Council (A/70/7/Add.28 and A/70/562)

Contingency Fund: consolidated statement of programme budget implications and revised estimates (A/70/7/Add.34; A/C.5/70/19 and A/C.5/70/19/Corr.1)

1. **Ms. Bartsiotas** (Controller), introducing the report of the Secretary-General on the request for a subvention to the Residual Special Court for Sierra Leone (A/70/565), said that the report outlined the financial challenges faced by the Court and provided estimates of resource requirements for the biennium 2016-2017.

2. Despite fundraising efforts, voluntary contributions would not be sufficient to meet the budgetary requirements for the Court's operations beyond March 2016. Consequently, the Secretary-General requested the General Assembly to approve a subvention in an amount of just over \$6 million for the funding of the activities of the Residual Special Court. Any further voluntary contributions received would reduce the utilization of the subvention and would be reflected in the second performance report on the programme budget for 2016-2017.

3. Introducing the report of the Secretary-General on the revised estimates resulting from resolutions and decisions adopted by the Human Rights Council at its twenty-eighth, twenty-ninth and thirtieth sessions and twenty-third special session (A/70/562), she said that the adoption of 57 resolutions and decisions had resulted in additional resource proposals in an amount of \$11.4 million.

4. Introducing the report of the Secretary-General on the contingency fund: consolidated statement of programme budget implications and revised estimates (A/C.5/70/19 and A/C.5/70/19/Corr.1), she said that, in the context of the budget outline for the biennium 2016-2017, the Assembly had decided that the level of the contingency fund should be set at \$41.7 million, or

0.75 per cent of the preliminary estimate for the biennium.

5. The report on the contingency fund presented potential new charges against the fund of \$34.1 million, reflecting the information available as at 8 December 2015, after taking into account the then-known recommendations of the Advisory Committee. Recommendations emanating from the Advisory Committee after issuance of the report had reduced the potential charges to \$18.5 million, mainly as a result of the recommendation to authorize the Secretary-General to enter into commitments for implementation of the decisions contained in the Addis Ababa Action Agenda and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which no longer represented a charge against the contingency fund.

6. Should the Committee endorse the recommendations of the Advisory Committee, a balance of \$23.2 million would remain in the contingency fund. Should the Assembly adopt additional resolutions entailing financial implications for the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2016-2017, the charges against the contingency fund would need to be adjusted accordingly.

7. **Mr. Ruiz Massieu** (Chair of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions), introducing the report of the Advisory Committee on the request for a subvention to the Residual Special Court for Sierra Leone (A/70/7/Add.30), said that, pursuant to article 3 of the Agreement establishing the Court, the expenses of the Residual Special Court were to be borne by voluntary contributions. However, the financial situation of the Court was such that it would be unable to continue its work beyond March 2016 without further voluntary contributions. The Secretary-General had indicated that the subvention proposal was a temporary measure and that he would hold consultations to seek a comprehensive solution.

8. In view of the projected funding shortfall for 2016, the uncertain nature of outstanding pledges and the urgent need for resources to ensure the continued operations of the Residual Special Court, the Advisory Committee recommended that the General Assembly should authorize the Secretary-General to enter into commitments, as a bridging financial mechanism, in an amount not to exceed \$2,438,500, to supplement the voluntary financial resources of the Court for the

period from 1 January to 31 December 2016, and should request the Secretary-General to report, at the main part of its seventy-first session, on the use of the commitment authority and on the results of his consultations with a view to the proposal of a comprehensive funding solution.

9. Introducing the report of the Advisory Committee on the revised estimates resulting from resolutions and decisions adopted by the Human Rights Council at its twenty-eighth, twenty-ninth and thirtieth sessions and twenty-third special session (A/70/7/Add.28), he said that the Advisory Committee welcomed the improvement in the presentation of the estimates. It recommended approval of the proposed resources except for the establishment of one P-3 post for a Web Content Management Officer, in view of existing capacity. The Advisory Committee also commented on the need for reliable information on the standard unit costs of interpretation and processing of documentation at each duty station in order to properly assess resource requirements.

10. Introducing the report of the Advisory Committee on the contingency fund (A/70/7/Add.34), he said that the Advisory Committee had considered an advance version of the Secretary-General's report, at which time a number of revised estimates and programme budget implications relating to resource requirements had been pending. Now that the final version of the report was available, the Secretary-General should provide an updated list of charges against the contingency fund to reflect the remaining recommendations of the Advisory Committee. The contingency fund was an essential budgetary instrument for addressing additional resource requirements in accordance with the provisions of General Assembly resolutions 41/213 and 42/211.

11. **Mr. Davidson** (South Africa), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, said that the Group attached great importance to the smooth functioning of mandated judicial institutions and paid close attention to the financial situation of the Residual Special Court for Sierra Leone. It supported the request for a subvention of \$6.03 million for the period 1 January 2016 to 31 December 2017.

12. The Group was a staunch supporter of the human rights pillar of the Organization in general, and of the Human Rights Council in particular: the mandates approved by the Council should be adequately

resourced to ensure full and timely implementation. He noted that the decisions and resolutions adopted by the Council in 2015 would result in estimated resource requirements of \$30,588,100, of which \$10,711,400 related to activities of a perennial nature already included in the programme budget for 2014-2015 and the proposed programme budget for 2016-2017.

13. He also noted that the remaining requirements of \$19,876,700 were new requests that the Secretary-General proposed to cover in the context of the second performance report on the programme budget for 2014-2015 from the approved appropriations for the biennium; and, in the amount of \$11,367,300, under the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2016-2017 as a charge against the contingency fund. The Group would seek clarification of those issues as well as of the proposed establishment of three new posts at the P-3 level to support activities mandated by the Council.

14. With regard to the consolidated statement of programme budget implications and revised estimates charged against the contingency fund, it was the responsibility of the Secretary-General to ensure that the proposed programme budget presented the fullest possible picture of the Organization's requirements for any given biennium. He noted that since the fund had been created its level had been set at 0.75 per cent of the overall level of resources of the programme budget outline. The Group acknowledged that it was not always possible to accommodate new initiatives within the biennial cycle of the regular budget and that additional resources must be considered. The contingency fund was an essential budgetary instrument for addressing additional resource requirements, subject to the provisions of General Assembly resolutions 41/213 and 42/211 on its use. The Secretary-General should notify the Assembly in a timely manner of any constraints faced.

15. **Mr. Çevik** (Turkey), speaking also on behalf of Mexico, Morocco, Norway and Switzerland, said that, in recent years, Member States had been placing greater emphasis on human rights as one of the three pillars of the work of the United Nations. Notwithstanding that trend, the human rights pillar received only a fraction of the regular budget resources allocated to the other two pillars, a fraction that was insufficient to cover all mandated activities, which largely depended on voluntary contributions. The regular budget should, at the very least, cover the cost

of all activities mandated by the Human Rights Council and other relevant intergovernmental bodies. It should also allow the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights to respond positively to Member States' requests for technical assistance and to provide an appropriate field response.

16. The regular budget resources requested by the Secretary-General for human rights activities for the biennium 2016-2017 amounted to \$197,963,200 before recosting, a decrease of 5.0 per cent compared with the revised appropriation for 2014-2015. Those resources were far from sufficient, in particular to cover the needs of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights. The Secretary-General should provide detailed information on the full cost of mandated activities.

17. The United Nations must be given the resources required to deliver its mandates effectively and efficiently. The promotion and protection of human rights, a key objective, contributed to strengthening international peace and security and to promoting development. The aim should be to establish sustainable funding in a manner that balanced the different interests of States without infringing on the independence of the High Commissioner for Human Rights.

18. **Mr. Koroma** (Sierra Leone) said that the Residual Special Court for Sierra Leone had been established to discharge the ongoing legal obligations of the Special Court for Sierra Leone, which had been closed on 31 December 2013 after successfully concluding its work. By its statute, the Residual Special Court was mandated to carry out judicial and non-judicial functions, including activities that needed to be carried out whether or not trials or appeals were being conducted. However, it could not deliver on its mandate without the required resources. His Government was working with partners to address funding gaps, and the Secretary-General had written to all Member States appealing for financial support for the Court. In addition, the Oversight Committee and Court officials had held more than 80 fundraising meetings, but few positive responses had been received. If the Court failed to deliver on its mandate owing to a lack of adequate funding there could be serious consequences.

19. The Residual Special Court had served as a model and inspiration for other international judicial

institutions; its legacy and achievements would be at risk if it should meet with untimely closure as a result of a lack of sustainable funding. In addition, the victims of conflict who had courageously testified before the Court and the people of Sierra Leone would lose faith in both the national and the international justice systems. Any loss of confidence would have a detrimental effect on the post-conflict peacebuilding process at a time when Sierra Leone was moving towards economic development and democratic stability. The Court must be guaranteed sustainable funding so as to carry out its mandate fully and contribute to peace and security, in particular in the West African subregion.

20. Securing sustainable funding remained a top priority for his Government in order to save the Court from closure. The Government would continue to work with Member States and other stakeholders to that end. In the interim, he urged the Committee to consider the request by the Secretary-General for two-year funding for the Residual Special Court in the amount of \$6,034,800.

21. **Mr. Yazdani** (Islamic Republic of Iran) said that the amounts requested in paragraphs 58 to 60 of the report of the Secretary-General on revised estimates resulting from resolutions and decisions adopted by the Human Rights Council at its 2015 sessions (A/70/562) were an irresponsible waste of the limited financial resources of the United Nations, and were being requested to satisfy the political interests of the sponsors of the mandate of the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran. Country-specific mandates of the Human Rights Council were politically motivated and ran counter to the basic principles of the Council: impartiality, universality and non-politicization of human rights issues. The allocation of the resources would harm the cause of human rights: the scarce financial resources of the Organization should be allocated more reasonably to fund areas that would truly improve their promotion and protection.

22. **Mr. Awad** (Syrian Arab Republic) said that his Government was firmly committed to realizing all human rights and fundamental freedoms for all Syrians in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations and international humanitarian law. However, his delegation had reservations concerning the allocation of financial resources under Council resolution 28/20 on the continuing grave deterioration in the human

rights and humanitarian situation in the Syrian Arab Republic.

Agenda item 134: Proposed programme budget for the biennium 2016-2017 (continued)

Revised estimates: effect of changes in rates of exchange and inflation (A/70/7/Add.35 and A/70/603)

Agenda item 144: Financing of the International Criminal Tribunal for the Prosecution of Persons Responsible for Genocide and Other Serious Violations of International Humanitarian Law Committed in the Territory of Rwanda and Rwandan Citizens Responsible for Genocide and Other Such Violations Committed in the Territory of Neighbouring States between 1 January and 31 December 1994 (continued) (A/70/7/Add.35 and A/70/606)

Agenda item 145: Financing of the International Tribunal for the Prosecution of Persons Responsible for Serious Violations of International Humanitarian Law Committed in the Territory of the Former Yugoslavia since 1991 (continued) (A/70/7/Add.35 and A/70/606)

Agenda item 146: Financing of the International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals (continued) (A/70/7/Add.35 and A/70/606)

23. **Ms. Bartsiotas** (Controller), introducing the reports of the Secretary-General on revised estimates: effect of changes in rates of exchange and inflation (A/70/603) and revised estimates for the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda, the International Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia and the International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals: effect of changes in rates of exchange and inflation (A/70/606), said that the reports provided updated projections, prepared in December 2015 on the basis of the latest information on inflation, rates of exchange and vacancy rates, of the effect on the proposed programme budget and the budgets of the International Tribunals. Consistent with past practice, the Advisory Committee's recommendations had been taken into account.

24. Taking into account the updated projections and recommendations of the Advisory Committee, the requirements for the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2016-2017 would amount to \$5,447.6 million. With regard to the Tribunals, the

final estimates would amount to \$1.8 million for the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda, \$95.7 million for the International Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia and \$133.5 million for the International Residual Mechanism.

25. **Mr. Ruiz Massieu** (Chair of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions), introducing the related report of the Advisory Committee (A/70/7/Add.35), said that the Advisory Committee had no objection to the revised estimates. The Secretary-General should provide updated recosting calculations using the most recent vacancy rates for all categories of staff, in line with the standard recosting methodology.

Agenda item 133: Programme budget for the biennium 2014-2015 (continued)

Second performance report on the programme budget for the biennium 2014-2015 (A/70/557 and A/70/619)

26. **Ms. Bartsiotas** (Controller), introducing the second performance report on the programme budget for the biennium 2014-2015 (A/70/557), said that the report provided an estimate of the anticipated final level of expenditure under the programme budget for the biennium, taking into account changes in the parameters for inflation and exchange rates and cost-of-living adjustments compared with the assumptions made in the first performance report (A/69/612). The report reflected actual expenditures between 1 January 2014 and 30 September 2015, with projected requirements for the last three months of the biennium.

27. By its resolutions 69/263 A and 69/274 A and B, the General Assembly had approved a revised appropriation of \$5,831.9 million. The continued strengthening of the dollar against a number of currencies used by the programme budget had generated a decrease of \$41.1 million, while favourable inflation rates for post and non-post objects of expenditure had contributed to a decrease of approximately \$11.1 million.

28. The report also took into account unforeseen and extraordinary expenses arising from decisions adopted by the Assembly and the Security Council during the biennium. The Secretary-General sought approval to appropriate an additional amount of \$34.5 million under the programme budget for 2014-2015 for the funding of those expenses as well as of the

implementation of flexible workspace in the Secretariat and the approved subvention to the Extraordinary Chambers in the Courts of Cambodia.

29. Unforeseen and extraordinary expenses incurred pursuant to Assembly resolution 68/249 subsequent to the finalization of the second performance report for the biennium 2014-2015 amounted to \$16.6 million. The bulk of that amount, \$10 million, related to human rights and humanitarian assistance; \$6.4 million related to peace and security; and \$88,700 had been authorized in connection with the extension of the appointment of the Delegate of the Secretary-General to the Subcommission on end-of-conflict issues within the Colombian peace process.

30. By its resolution 69/274, the Assembly had authorized the Secretary-General to enter into commitments up to an amount of \$5.8 million for the implementation of flexible workplace strategies in the Secretariat Building. In addition, as an exceptional measure, it had authorized him to enter into commitments in an amount not to exceed \$12.1 million to supplement the voluntary financial resources of the international component of the Extraordinary Chambers in the Courts of Cambodia for the period from 1 January to 31 December 2015; the Secretary-General had been requested to report on the use of the commitment authority in the context of the second performance report for the biennium 2014-2015. The amounts authorized had been fully utilized.

31. A lower budget implementation rate was projected under some sections of the programme budget, notably under section 3, Political affairs, mainly related to decreased requirements in special political missions, while some increases were also projected, mainly under section 34, Safety and security, reflecting increased requirements for overtime costs at Headquarters and regional commissions.

32. An increase of approximately \$27.5 million was projected for salaries and common staff costs, the result of higher-than-budgeted standard costs and lower vacancy rates. That increase was offset by a decrease of \$39.1 million under non-post objects of expenditure. An increase of \$5.6 million was projected under staff assessment.

33. The anticipated final level of expenditure under the expenditure sections of the programme budget for the biennium 2014-2015 amounted to \$5,808.3 million,

reflecting a net decrease of \$23.6 million compared with the revised appropriation of \$5,831.9 million.

34. Projected income was estimated at \$574.7 million, representing an increase of \$27.8 million over the revised income estimates a year earlier. The increase was under section 2, General income, and was broadly related to higher-than-anticipated reimbursements of costs by funds and programmes in connection with the administration of justice. Overall, the anticipated final level of expenditure and income for the biennium 2014-2015 reflected a reduction of \$51.5 million compared with the revised appropriation for 2014-2015.

35. **Mr. Ruiz Massieu** (Chair of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions), introducing the related report of the Advisory Committee (A/70/619), noted that the anticipated final level of expenditures and income for the biennium represented a net reduction of \$51.5 million compared with the revised appropriation and estimate of income approved by the Assembly. The Secretary-General's report contained insufficient information on the factors underlying the reported resource changes, a concern that he should address in future performance reports. The Advisory Committee recommended that the Assembly should request the Secretary-General to make available supplementary information on the delivery of the budget for the most recent completed financial period to allow for more informed resource allocation decisions.

36. The Advisory Committee noted that the forward purchasing of foreign currencies over the period from 2013 to 2015 had improved budget predictability. However, the information presented in the Secretary-General's report fell short of the Assembly's request for a comprehensive assessment of the application of the forward purchasing methodology.

37. The Advisory Committee had expected a greater reduction in expenditure on staff travel in the light of reduced average ticket prices and potential savings under the revised travel policy. Lastly, it commended the Secretary-General on his efforts to reduce unliquidated obligations and trusted that he would provide more information in future performance reports.

38. **Mr. Davidson** (South Africa), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, said that the Group attached great importance to the effective and smooth

functioning of the Organization. Performance reports were a particularly important benchmark in the budget process, and the second performance report was a critical priority for the Group.

39. The Group noted that the anticipated final level of expenditure under the expenditure sections of the programme budget for the biennium 2014-2015 amounted to \$5,808.3 million, and that overall there was a reduction of \$51.5 million compared with the revised appropriation for the biennium.

40. The current budget methodology, including recosting, had generated savings of some \$58.1 million in 2014-2015. Recosting was an integral part of the budget procedures established by General Assembly resolutions 41/213 and 42/211 and had been consistently applied to the budget of the United Nations since the adoption of resolution 41/213. It allowed the Organization to cope with highly volatile external macroeconomic factors. The Group rejected any attempt to undermine the compromise achieved more than 20 years before with regard to budget procedures and decision-making and hoped to see an end to discussion of recosting.

41. The Organization's experience of forward purchasing had been positive. He welcomed the information provided by the Secretary-General and looked forward to further indications of how such measures could generate efficiencies by providing greater budget predictability while avoiding a negative impact on mandate delivery.

42. **Mr. Onuma** (Japan) said that his delegation noted the anticipated final level of expenditure under the expenditure sections of the programme budget for the biennium 2014-2015 at \$5,808.3 million, a decrease of \$23.6 million compared with the revised appropriation, mainly related to changes in exchange rates and inflation rates. However, it would like to receive a more detailed explanation of the projected increase in expenditures for both post and non-post resource requirements, including for general operating expenses and improvement of premises.

43. It also wished to know how the Secretariat had implemented the resolutions on air travel, and why the savings and efficiencies achieved had been less than expected. Lastly, his delegation urged the Secretary-General not to allow any last minute, unnecessary spending.

Capital master plan (A/C.5/70/L.9)

Draft resolution A/C.5/70/L.9: Capital master plan

44. *Draft resolution A/C.5/70/L.9 was adopted.*

The meeting rose at 11.15 a.m.



General Assembly

Seventieth session

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Fifth Committee

Summary record of the 22nd meeting

Held at Headquarters, New York, on Tuesday, 22 December 2015, at 10 a.m.

Chair: Mr. Bhattarai (Nepal)
*Chair of the Advisory Committee on Administrative
and Budgetary Questions:* Mr. Ruiz Massieu

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Agenda item 134: Proposed programme budget for the biennium 2016-2017
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*Programme budget implications of draft resolution A/70/L.38: Organization of
the 2016 High-level Meeting on HIV/AIDS*

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The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Agenda item 134: Proposed programme budget for the biennium 2016-2017 (continued)

Programme budget implications of draft resolution A/70/L.38: Organization of the 2016 High-level Meeting on HIV/AIDS (A/70/7/Add.40; A/C.5/70/20)

1. **Mr. Huisman** (Director, Programme Planning and Budget Division), introducing the statement submitted by the Secretary-General in accordance with rule 153 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly of the programme budget implications of draft resolution A/70/L.38: Organization of the 2016 High-level Meeting on HIV/AIDS (A/C.5/70/20), said that it was proposed that an additional appropriation of \$118,200 under section 2, General Assembly and Economic and Social Council affairs and conference management, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2016-2017 should be approved as a charge against the contingency fund.

2. **Mr. Ruiz Massieu** (Chair of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions), introducing the related report of the Advisory Committee (A/70/7/Add.40), said that the Advisory Committee recommended that the General Assembly should request the Secretary-General to make every effort to absorb the additional requirements of \$118,200 proposed under section 2 of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2016-2017. If they could not be absorbed, the additional expenditure should be reflected in the performance report for the biennium.

The meeting rose at 10.15 a.m.



General Assembly

Seventieth session

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Summary record of the 23rd meeting

Held at Headquarters, New York, on Wednesday, 23 December 2015, at 3 p.m.

Chair: Mr. Bhattarai (Nepal)
*Chair of the Advisory Committee on Administrative
 and Budgetary Questions:* Mr. Ruiz Massieu

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 in the Territory of Neighbouring States between 1 January and 31 December 1994
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Agenda item 145: Financing of the International Tribunal for the Prosecution of
 Persons Responsible for Serious Violations of International Humanitarian Law
 Committed in the Territory of the Former Yugoslavia since 1991 (*continued*)

Agenda item 146: Financing of the International Residual Mechanism for Criminal
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Agenda item 141: United Nations common system (*continued*)

Agenda item 138: Scale of assessments for the apportionment of the expenses of the
 United Nations (*continued*)

Agenda item 147: Scale of assessments for the apportionment of the expenses of
 United Nations peacekeeping operations (*continued*)

Agenda item 134: Proposed programme budget for the biennium 2016-2017
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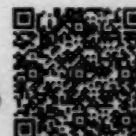
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Programme budget implications relating to the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2016-2017

Questions relating to the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2016-2017

Draft report of the Fifth Committee

Agenda item 132: Review of the efficiency of the administrative and financial functioning of the United Nations (*continued*)

Questions deferred for future consideration

Completion of the work of the Fifth Committee at the main part of the seventieth session of the General Assembly

The meeting was called to order at 5 p.m.

Agenda item 133: Programme budget for the biennium 2014-2015 (continued) (A/C.5/70/L.10)

Draft resolution A/C.5/70/L.10: Programme budget for the biennium 2014-2015

1. *Draft resolution A/C.5/70/L.10 was adopted.*

Agenda item 144: Financing of the International Criminal Tribunal for the Prosecution of Persons Responsible for Genocide and Other Serious Violations of International Humanitarian Law Committed in the Territory of Rwanda and Rwandan Citizens Responsible for Genocide and Other Such Violations Committed in the Territory of Neighbouring States between 1 January and 31 December 1994 (continued) (A/C.5/70/L.11)

Draft resolution A/C.5/70/L.11: Financing of the International Criminal Tribunal for the Prosecution of Persons Responsible for Genocide and Other Serious Violations of International Humanitarian Law Committed in the Territory of Rwanda and Rwandan Citizens Responsible for Genocide and Other Such Violations Committed in the Territory of Neighbouring States between 1 January and 31 December 1994

2. *Draft resolution A/C.5/70/L.11 was adopted.*

Agenda item 145: Financing of the International Tribunal for the Prosecution of Persons Responsible for Serious Violations of International Humanitarian Law Committed in the Territory of the Former Yugoslavia since 1991 (continued) (A/C.5/70/L.12)

Draft resolution A/C.5/70/L.12: Financing of the International Tribunal for the Prosecution of Persons Responsible for Serious Violations of International Humanitarian Law Committed in the Territory of the Former Yugoslavia since 1991

3. *Draft resolution A/C.5/70/L.12 was adopted.*

Agenda item 146: Financing of the International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals (continued) (A/C.5/70/L.13)

Draft resolution A/C.5/70/L.13: International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals

4. *Draft resolution A/C.5/70/L.13 was adopted.*

Agenda item 141: United Nations common system (continued) (A/C.5/70/L.14)

Draft resolution A/C.5/70/L.14: United Nations common system

5. *Draft resolution A/C.5/70/L.14 was adopted.*

Agenda item 138: Scale of assessments for the apportionment of the expenses of the United Nations (continued) (A/C.5/70/L.15)

Draft resolution A/C.5/70/L.15: Scale of assessments for the apportionment of the expenses of the United Nations

6. *Draft resolution A/C.5/70/L.15 was adopted.*

Agenda item 147: Scale of assessments for the apportionment of the expenses of United Nations peacekeeping operations (continued) (A/C.5/70/L.16)

Draft resolution A/C.5/70/L.16: Scale of assessments for the apportionment of the expenses of United Nations peacekeeping operations

7. *Draft resolution A/C.5/70/L.16 was adopted.*

8. **The Chair** said that, on an exceptional basis for the 2016-2018 scale period only, three countries in level B, the Bahamas, Bahrain and Oman, would be afforded discounts of 7.5 per cent in their assessment rates. In 2018 only, Saudi Arabia would be afforded a 7.5 per cent discount. The discounts would be borne on a pro rata basis by the permanent members of the Security Council.

Agenda item 134: Proposed programme budget for the biennium 2016-2017 (continued)

Programme budget implications relating to the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2016-2017 (A/C.5/70/L.17)

Draft decision A/C.5/70/L.17: Programme budget implications relating to the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2016-2017

9. *Draft decision A/C.5/70/L.17 was adopted.*

Questions relating to the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2016-2017 (A/C.5/70/L.18)

Draft resolution A/C.5/70/L.18: Questions relating to the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2016-2017

10. *Draft resolution A/C.5/70/L.18 was adopted.*

*Draft report of the Fifth Committee
(A/C.5/70/L.23)*

11. **The Chair** drew attention to the draft report of the Fifth Committee on the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2016-2017 (A/C.5/70/L.23), which described the actions taken by the Committee and contained its recommendations. He invited the Committee to consider the recommendations in part III.

*Draft resolution I: Questions relating to the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2016-2017
(A/C.5/70/L.18)*

12. **The Chair** recalled that draft resolution I had been adopted earlier in the meeting.

Draft resolution II: Special subjects relating to the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2016-2017 (A/C.5/70/L.19)

13. **Mr. Sánchez Azcuy** (Cuba) said, with regard to the Secretary-General's report on estimates in respect of special political missions, good offices and other political initiatives authorized by the General Assembly and/or the Security Council under thematic cluster I: special and personal envoys and special advisers of the Secretary-General (A/70/348/Add.1), that no intergovernmental agreement on the definition of the responsibility to protect had been reached. The budget estimates and related narrative for the Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on the Responsibility to Protect should be removed from the budget document until the General Assembly took decisions on the concept, its implementation and scope, and other related matters.

14. He proposed that two new preambular paragraphs and two new operative paragraphs should be inserted in section XX of draft resolution A/C.5/70/L.19. The first new preambular paragraph would read, "Recalling that the General Assembly has not decided on the concept of responsibility to protect, its scope, implications and possible means of implementation"; the second new preambular paragraph would read, "Noting that the estimates of thematic cluster I

comprise narratives, functions, expected accomplishments, indicators of achievements, outputs, and other information related to the Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on the Responsibility to Protect". The first new operative paragraph would read, "Decides to delete all references to the activities and outputs related to the responsibility to protect, as contained in the strategic framework and the related narratives of the Office of the Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on the Prevention of Genocide"; the second new operative paragraph would read, "Requests the Secretary-General to issue a corrigendum to his report".

15. **Mr. Maes** (Luxembourg), speaking on behalf of the European Union, requested a recorded vote on the proposed oral amendment, the effects of which went beyond the purview of the Committee.

Statements made in explanation of vote before the voting

16. **Mr. Vachon** (Canada), speaking also on behalf of Australia and New Zealand, said that those delegations seconded the call for a recorded vote. The World Summit Outcome, adopted by the General Assembly in 2005, called on individual States and the international community to assume their responsibility under the Charter of the United Nations to protect populations from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity. The three delegations would vote against the proposed oral amendment and encouraged others to do likewise.

17. **Mr. Jiménez** (Nicaragua) said that the definition of the concept of responsibility to protect must be based on manifest recognition of the principles of sovereignty, territorial integrity and non-interference in the domestic affairs of States. Since 2012, the resources for the Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on the Responsibility to Protect had been requested in the context of the Office of the Special Adviser on the Prevention of Genocide, whose functions his delegation fully supported in line with the position of principle of his Government against genocide. His delegation would support the proposed oral amendment and invited others to do likewise.

18. **Mr. Yazdani** (Islamic Republic of Iran) said that since the adoption of General Assembly resolution 63/308 there had been no formal intergovernmental debate or agreement among Member States regarding the definition of the concept of responsibility to

protect, its scope and implications, and possible means of implementation. His delegation would therefore support the proposed oral amendment.

19. **The Chair** said that a recorded vote had been requested.

20. *At the request of the representative of Luxembourg, a recorded vote was taken on the oral amendment proposed by Cuba.*

In favour:

Belarus, Cuba, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Ecuador, Egypt, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Libya, Nicaragua, Pakistan, Sierra Leone, Solomon Islands, Sudan, Syrian Arab Republic, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Zimbabwe.

Against:

Albania, Andorra, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Barbados, Belgium, Benin, Bhutan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Brazil, Bulgaria, Canada, Chile, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Guatemala, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Latvia, Lebanon, Liberia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Mexico, Monaco, Montenegro, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nigeria, Norway, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Rwanda, San Marino, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Sudan, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Turkey, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Uruguay.

Abstaining:

Algeria, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Brunei Darussalam, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cambodia, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, China, Colombia, Congo, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ethiopia, Guinea, Guyana, Honduras, Iraq, Jamaica, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Malaysia, Mali, Mauritania, Mauritius, Morocco, Myanmar, Niger, Oman, Philippines, Qatar, Russian Federation, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Serbia, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Suriname, Thailand, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Uganda, United Arab

Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Yemen, Zambia.

21. *The oral amendment proposed by Cuba was rejected by 76 votes to 15, with 55 abstentions.*

22. *Draft resolution II was adopted.*

Draft resolution III: Programme budget for the biennium 2016-2017 (A/C.5/70/L.20)

23. **The Chair** drew attention to draft resolution III. Section A dealt with budget appropriations for the biennium 2016-2017, section B with income estimates for the biennium 2016-2017 and section C with the financing of appropriations for the year 2016.

24. *Draft resolution III was adopted.*

Draft resolution IV: Unforeseen and extraordinary expenses for the biennium 2016-2017 (A/C.5/70/L.21)

25. *Draft resolution IV was adopted.*

Draft resolution V: Working Capital Fund for the biennium 2016-2017 (A/C.5/70/L.22)

26. *Draft resolution V was adopted.*

27. Chair of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions: Mr. Ruiz Massieu invited the Committee to adopt the draft report on the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2016-2017 (A/C.5/70/L.23).

28. *The draft report of the Fifth Committee was adopted.*

Agenda item 132: Review of the efficiency of the administrative and financial functioning of the United Nations (continued)

Questions deferred for future consideration (A/C.5/70/L.24)

Draft decision A/C.5/70/L.24: Questions deferred for future consideration

29. *Draft decision A/C.5/70/L.24 was adopted.*

Completion of the work of the Fifth Committee at the main part of the seventieth session of the General Assembly

30. **Mr. Takasu** (Under-Secretary-General for Management) said that the consensus on the

programme budget reflected agreement among Member States that they should fulfil their financial responsibilities to the United Nations. The regular budget had remained steady for the preceding four bienniums, apart from provisions for recosting and special political missions. As a result of the Secretary-General's quest for efficiencies, the programme budget for the biennium 2016-2017 was no exception, being lower than the outline level and even the final appropriation for 2010-2011.

31. Although the regular budget was much reduced, the Secretariat was grateful to the Committee for enabling the United Nations to support follow-up to and review of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, pending consideration of a comprehensive report in 2016. The Secretariat had upheld its obligation to make the best use of the resources entrusted to it by Member States, but the further cut in public information and common support services at the final stage of the negotiations had gone beyond identified efficiencies and would pose an operational challenge given the ongoing and new initiatives to transform the Organization and establish a truly global Secretariat. As demands for the implementation of new mandates grew, the budget decisions of the General Assembly were critical to the Secretariat's ability to adapt to the changing landscape.

32. **The Chair** commended the Committee on its extraordinary efficiency at the main part of the session, notwithstanding its heavy workload related to consideration of the programme budget for 2016-2017, the United Nations common system compensation package, the scale of assessments and the outcomes of the processes marking the seventieth anniversary of the Organization. The Committee's accomplishments would not have been possible without the tireless efforts of all involved.

33. **Mr. Davidson** (South Africa), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, said that the Committee had considered numerous items that were critical to the efficient and effective functioning of the United Nations, including the programme budget for 2016-2017, revised estimates, programme budget implications of draft resolutions, the scale of assessments, the United Nations common system, various capital projects, the international tribunals, and the reports of the Committee on Conferences and the Committee for Programme and Coordination. The

Committee had approved a \$5.4 billion budget focused on enhancing the Organization's ability to deliver on its mandates more effectively and efficiently, and had adopted a common system package that was fit for purpose, after a comprehensive review by the International Civil Service Commission. The Group had particularly focused on protecting the development pillar of the United Nations, and acknowledged the policy guidance and resources provided.

34. **Mr. Kisoka** (United Republic of Tanzania), speaking on behalf of the Group of African States, welcomed the Committee's accomplishments, achieved at the expert level, and hoped that future consultations would be guided by a similar spirit of consensus. The Group expected the Secretary-General and managers to utilize the limited resources allocated to ensure the timely implementation of mandates, without fail.

35. **Mr. Vrallas** (Observer for the European Union) commended the members of the Fifth Committee on their exemplary constructive engagement, which had permitted timely consensus on a number of critical items, including the programme budget and the common system, milestone agreements that would define the functioning of the Organization in the years ahead. The members of the European Union were staunch supporters of the United Nations and effective multilateralism and greatly valued the principle of consensus-based decision-making at the heart of the Committee's working practices. The flexibility demonstrated by groups and delegations was a testament to their ability to take collective decisions in the interest of the Organization and its objectives.

36. The programme budget for 2016-2017 should allow the Organization to implement the complex mandates set forth in the landmark multilateral agreements concluded on the occasion of its seventieth anniversary. Similarly, the agreement on the compensation package for Professional staff should allow the Organization to attract staff of the highest professional expertise and integrity.

37. **Mr. Minami** (Japan) said that the timely completion of the Fifth Committee's work was the latest success in a series of achievements for multilateral diplomacy at the United Nations, which included the outcomes of the Third United Nations World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction, the third International Conference on Financing for Development and the twenty-first session of the

Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, as well as the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

38. His delegation welcomed the consensus on the first reform of the common system compensation package to be enacted in 25 years, as well as the outcome of the negotiations on the programme budget for 2016-2017, in spite of its concerns about the process for determining the revised estimates for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda. A more structured process for the consideration of those matters should be followed in 2016. He welcomed the win-win outcome of the Committee's work, which must be soundly managed to ensure the functioning of the Organization and delivery of its mandates.

39. **Mr. Guo Xuejun** (China) said that he hoped that the cooperative spirit that had characterized the Fifth Committee's negotiations would be maintained. The draft resolutions adopted by the Committee, while not necessarily satisfactory, reflected a consensus among Member States on measures to strengthen the work of the Organization, and laid the foundation for the following phase of the Committee's negotiations.

40. **Ms. Oh Youngju** (Republic of Korea) said that, through the collective efforts of Member States, the Committee had avoided the protracted negotiations on contentious issues that had characterized previous years' consultations. Dialogue, partnership and agreement were essential to the sustainability of the General Assembly, particularly the Fifth Committee. The Committee's constructive working methods and tradition of consensus-based decision-making should be maintained.

41. The outcomes achieved by the Committee contributed significantly to the United Nations. It had adopted the scale of assessments for the period 2016-2018, the foundation for the Organization's financial sustainability, and had approved an appropriate budget level for the biennium by enacting reforms aimed at realizing efficiencies while ensuring effective mandate implementation and providing resources for the initial phase of implementation of the 2030 Agenda. The Committee had also modernized the compensation package for United Nations staff with a view to enhancing its transparency and sustainability.

42. **Ms. Norman Chalet** (United States of America) said that the collaborative nature of the negotiations and the consensus achieved on the items before the Committee were a testament to Member States' commitment to enabling the Organization to deliver its vital mandates in an efficient manner. The Committee would continue to build on the critical decisions made with a view to ensuring that the regular budget instilled budgetary discipline; that the compensation package was more modern, simple and cost-effective; that major business transformation initiatives were mainstreamed; and that major construction projects were adequately resourced and governed.

43. **Mr. Burlity** (Angola) welcomed delegations' extraordinary commitment throughout the main part of the session as having fostered increased mutual trust and respect and enabled the Committee to conclude its negotiations within the time allocated. The lessons to be learned from the Committee's achievements, particularly with regard to the need to empower and support experts throughout the negotiation process in order to ensure fruitful outcomes, could be usefully applied to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of its working methods.

44. **Mr. García Landa** (Mexico) said that the outcomes of the Committee's deliberations placed it on a path to reach constructive agreements at the resumed part of the session.

45. **The Chair** declared that the Fifth Committee had completed its work at the main part of the seventieth session of the General Assembly.

The meeting rose at 6.45 p.m.



General Assembly

Seventieth session

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Summary record of the 24th meeting

Held at Headquarters, New York, on Monday, 29 February 2016, at 10 a.m.

Chair: Mr. Bhattarai (Nepal)
*Chair of the Advisory Committee on Administrative
and Budgetary Questions: Mr. Ruiz Massieu*

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*Report of the Board of Auditors on the strategic heritage plan of the United
Nations Office at Geneva*

*Report of the Board of Auditors on progress in the handling of information and
communications technology affairs in the Secretariat*

Agenda item 140: Joint Inspection Unit

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The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Organization of work (A/C.5/70/L.25)

1. **The Chair** invited the Committee to consider the proposed tentative and provisional programme of work for the first part of the resumed seventieth session, prepared on the basis of the note by the Secretariat on the status of preparedness of documentation (A/C.5/70/L.25).

2. **Mr. Bamrungphong** (Thailand), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, said that the Group was committed to thorough consideration of all agenda items, including those deferred from the sixty-ninth session. In particular, it hoped that delegations would engage constructively in discussions on the operational arrangements of the Advisory Committee, a matter that should not be deferred further.

3. The Group was concerned at the status of documentation for the resumed part of the session. Although noticeable improvements had been made, the late issuance of important reports was a chronic problem that hindered the ability of the Committee to complete its work effectively. Efforts should be made to improve the Committee's working methods through the timely submission of Secretariat and Advisory Committee reports in all official languages.

4. The Group was disappointed that the Secretary-General had yet to provide a comprehensive proposal for the delivery of mandates in support of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development, within the broader United Nations system, including the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, the regional commissions and the United Nations Development Account, as requested in General Assembly resolution 70/247. That raised questions about how serious the Secretariat was about adhering to the mandates given to it by the Assembly. The Group looked forward to receiving a formal communication from the Secretary-General clarifying the reasons for his inability to meet the deadline and providing a clear timeline for submission of a proposal to the Advisory Committee.

5. In view of the delays in the provision of information to Member States at the main part of the session, the Group looked forward to a comprehensive

report by the Secretary-General fully responding to Assembly mandates and addressing the concerns of Member States regarding adequate financing for the United Nations system in the context of the 2030 Agenda, guaranteeing equal attention to both the international and regional levels.

6. **Mr. Cortorreal** (Dominican Republic), speaking on behalf of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC), said that the Community was extremely concerned at the delay in the submission of the comprehensive proposal for the effective and efficient delivery of mandates in support of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda. The Secretariat must comply with the mandates entrusted to it by the Assembly and give priority to the 2030 Agenda to reflect the importance that Member States attached to it.

7. The Community was also concerned at the delay in amending the Staff Regulations and Rules in accordance with General Assembly resolution 70/244, on the United Nations common system. Delays in the submission of reports hindered the ability of Member States to take informed decisions and had a negative impact on mandate delivery. The Secretariat should take the necessary remedial actions to expedite the submission of reports for consideration by the Assembly.

8. A further concern was the lack of progress in reviewing the current arrangements for the funding and backstopping of special political missions, an issue deferred on several occasions. His delegation hoped for comprehensive reform at the current part of the resumed session. Member States should engage proactively in order to find common ground and improve the current, dysfunctional system. In that regard he noted the views of the Advisory Group of Experts on the Review of the Peacebuilding Architecture and the High-level Independent Panel on Peace Operations. Decisions taken must be honoured, and the time had come to make progress on the issue. Member States had a collective responsibility to respond to the challenges that the Organization faced.

9. With regard to the operational arrangements of the Advisory Committee, the Community recognized the crucial role that the Advisory Committee played as an independent expert body in advising the Assembly and the Fifth Committee in the performance of functions that had a great impact on the United Nations

and its specialized agencies. The scope of the work of the Organization had become broader and the need for resources was growing. It was important to review the operational arrangements of the Advisory Committee, including the conditions of service of its members, in recognition of its enhanced status and to enable its members to fully perform their functions.

10. Measures must be taken to strengthen accountability at the institutional and individual levels in order to improve the administrative and budgetary functioning of the Organization. It was also important to ensure the independence of the Joint Inspection Unit (JIU). Lastly, delegations must do their utmost to ensure that the Committee completed its work on time.

11. **Mr. Kisoka** (United Republic of Tanzania), speaking on behalf of the Group of African States, said that the Committee must ensure strict observance of the principles of inclusiveness, openness and transparency in conducting its negotiations and should avoid closed discussions in small configurations. The programme of work should be adjusted to reflect progress in negotiations.

12. The Committee's workload had increased compared to previous sessions but the allocated time remained unchanged. Innovative ideas were needed to conclude all items on time and, to that end, additional efforts were needed to ensure the timely availability of documents.

13. The Group looked forward to concluding the negotiations on the funding and backstopping arrangements for special political missions and the operational arrangements of the Advisory Committee, and would not endorse any ideas that would entail business as usual. It was unfortunate that the Committee had failed to conclude its negotiations on human resources management at the sixty-ninth session and the Group remained open to ideas on how to proceed.

14. With regard to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, the Group was seriously disappointed that the Secretary-General had not yet presented a proposal on funding, as called for by the Assembly. It was also concerned that the consolidation of inputs from key stakeholders, including funds, programmes and specialized agencies, had yet to take place, that a number of issues still needed to be addressed, and that there was a lack of common understanding on the part of United Nations

system organizations and departments on ways to address the matter. The performance of the Secretary-General and his senior managers would be assessed on the basis of the approach taken to those issues and not on the basis of how many overseas trips he and his managers conducted during his time in office.

15. **Mr. Vrailas** (Observer for the European Union), speaking also on behalf of the candidate countries Albania, Montenegro, Serbia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia; the stabilization and association process country Bosnia and Herzegovina; and, in addition, Armenia, Georgia, the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine, said that the timely submission of all required documentation in all official languages was important to facilitate the quality and speed of discussions. Many of the reports on human resources management were, however, over 18 months old, and by the seventy-first session the Committee would have before it updated reports on all human resources management issues. He called for a pragmatic approach to tackling other issues deferred from previous sessions, including the resident coordinator system. However, newer items — construction and property management and special political missions — also deserved the utmost attention.

16. Following the adoption of a programme budget for the new biennium, the revised estimates to be presented must correspond to mandated activities and be in line with established budget procedures. In particular, with regard to revised estimates relating to the future of United Nations peace operations and the pending report on the 2030 Agenda, the principles of effectiveness, efficiency and budgetary discipline were more important than ever, as emerging and growing challenges gave rise to new functions and mandates, requiring new approaches.

17. Comprehensive proposals were needed in respect of major change initiatives in order to avoid a piecemeal approach to budgeting. That implied managing for results as well as reprioritization and redeployment of mandates and resources. His delegation sought clarification of how and when proposals on those change initiatives would be presented, given the Committee's heavy workload. There was still substantial scope for improving the functioning of the United Nations by taking full advantage of new information technology platforms in the interest of a leaner and more mobile Organization. The European Union remained committed to working

closely with all partners in a spirit of openness, transparency and constructive cooperation in order to reach decisions by consensus.

18. **Mr. Guo Xuejun** (China) said that the Committee must improve its own working methods and efficiency in order to enhance the efficiency of the Organization as a whole. Coordination between Member States, the Secretariat and the Advisory Committee should be strengthened to ensure that the Committee concluded its work on time.

19. As it was the first year of implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, it was regrettable that the Secretariat had not yet submitted a report on its implementation. His delegation hoped that the report would be submitted in time to ensure sufficient allocation of resources for implementation of the Agenda.

20. Member States had demonstrated vigorous political support for the work of the Committee but that support must be translated into pragmatic action. Concerning the financing of special political missions, his delegation stood ready to participate constructively in the deliberations with a view to reaching consensus.

21. The Secretariat needed to improve its internal management and financial discipline and make judicious use of the resources contributed by Member States. It should implement the recommendations of the Joint Inspection Unit and the Board of Auditors, as well as the measures approved by the Assembly to strengthen internal management. Lastly, the Organization should ensure strict adherence to the budget approved for the biennium 2016-2017.

22. **Mr. Minami** (Japan) said that the positive contributions of the Secretariat and the Bureau, and the flexibility demonstrated by all Member States, had made it possible for the Committee to complete its work on time at the main part of the session. Many important issues were now before the Committee, and it was vital to build on the positive momentum created. The Secretariat and the Advisory Committee should ensure the timely submission of documentation. His delegation would engage in all discussions in a positive and constructive manner in order to achieve consensus on all items in accordance with General Assembly resolution 41/213.

23. **Ms. Coleman** (United States of America) said that the Secretary-General had initiated several critical

reform initiatives designed to make the Organization more modern, nimble and effective. It was important to seize all opportunities to push forward with change and ensure that the reforms reached their full potential.

24. The Secretariat should ensure the thorough implementation of Umoja, the International Public Sector Accounting Standards and the information and communications technology strategy. For reforms still in the development stage, such as the global service delivery model, it should continue their thoughtful development. All those reforms and others such as mobility and flexible workspace were vital pieces of an interlocking change initiative that would make the United Nations the best that it could be.

25. Her delegation looked forward to consideration of the report of the Board of Auditors on the strategic heritage plan of the United Nations Office at Geneva and the steps that could be taken to ensure good governance and accountability. In addition, the report of the Board on information and communications technology should provide helpful insights into the challenges in implementing a comprehensive information and communications technology strategy for the Organization.

26. Concerning construction, establishing a rationalized maintenance programme through the strategic capital review and ensuring the most efficient use of space through flexible workspace strategies were key elements of a wider strategy to improve asset management. In combination with related reforms, such as Umoja and the global service delivery model, those efforts would help to optimize the United Nations global footprint.

27. Conflict prevention was key to peace and stability around the world. Her delegation was interested in ensuring that the special political mission in Burundi and other activities, such as those relating to the Islamic Republic of Iran and Al-Qaida, were funded in order to achieve the objectives set by Member States. Lastly, she looked forward to the report of the Secretary-General on how the United Nations would reprioritize resources and activities to best support Member States in meeting the Sustainable Development Goals.

28. **Mr. Khalizov** (Russian Federation) said that significant attention needed to be paid to human resources management at the resumed part of the session. The fact that decisions had been postponed

was a reflection of the serious discord among Member States and their reluctance to adopt various proposals by the Secretary-General. Mobility was an especially crucial issue; he trusted that the Committee would be provided with further information on the parameters of the initiative and its potential impact on the activities of the Organization.

29. Concerning capital investment projects, the incremental recapitalization approach to maintaining property, with its significant financial consequences, required closer examination and greater justification. The Assembly should adopt decisions on repair or construction projects on a case-by-case basis.

30. A further issue with significant budgetary implications for the Organization was the way in which medical insurance obligations for United Nations retirees were met. His delegation was not convinced that there were advantages in the pay-as-you-accrue approach compared to the current pay-as-you-go scheme, and believed that it was too early to take any substantive decisions.

31. It was regrettable that the Committee had been unable to approve proposals on the operational arrangements of the Advisory Committee, as the burden on its expert members had increased significantly in recent years. The Advisory Committee should be converted to a standing body and the conditions of service of its members improved. His delegation hoped for a positive decision on the issue without further delay. Lastly, his delegation had traditionally supported the activities of the Joint Inspection Unit; it was essential for the Unit to be given the resources it required to fully discharge its mandate.

32. **The Chair** said that he took it that the Committee wished to approve the proposed programme of work on the understanding that it would be adjusted as necessary to make best use of available time as the first part of the resumed session progressed.

Agenda item 134: Programme budget for the biennium 2016-2017 (continued)

Progress in the implementation of the organizational resilience management system (A/70/7/Add.41 and A/70/660)

33. **Mr. Boyd** (Director, Facilities and Commercial Services Division), introducing the report of the

Secretary-General on progress in the implementation of the organizational resilience management system (A/70/660), said that the system provided guidance on how different stakeholders contributing to emergency preparedness, prevention, response and recovery should collaborate to ensure resilience by the Organization when facing events that could cause operational disruption. The report summarized the implementation of the system at United Nations Headquarters in New York, as well as at offices away from Headquarters, and in regional commissions and in field missions of the Departments of Peacekeeping Operations, Field Support and Political Affairs. The report demonstrated that the strategy on how to extend the system to the specialized agencies, funds and programmes had been successful, and provided information on the progress made in implementing the system framework in those entities.

34. At United Nations Headquarters, collaboration between the Departments of Management, Safety and Security, and Public Information had become a regular routine, as had collaboration in the bodies specifically created for emergency management, such as the Senior Emergency Policy Team, the Crisis Operations Group and the Emergency Operations Centre. The organizational resilience management system framework had been promulgated to members of those entities and online courses on emergency preparedness and face-to-face training had been offered to improve the ability of staff to act in emergency situations.

35. Significant progress had been made in developing and applying the organizational resilience management system across the United Nations common system. Offices away from Headquarters and the regional commissions, in particular, had reported impressive progress in implementation of the system, which facilitated joint emergency management by all United Nations organizations at the same location and created synergy gains. After full implementation of the system at Headquarters for the Departments of Peacekeeping Operations, Field Support and Political Affairs, the policy had been promulgated to the field with a target of summer 2016 for full implementation. An assessment of the status of implementation had been undertaken in all peacekeeping and special political missions; remote support and review of emergency plans in peacekeeping missions were ongoing. Assistance missions had been provided for the United Nations Mission in Liberia and the United Nations

Mission in Kosovo in December 2015 and February 2016, with dates for other assistance missions to be confirmed.

36. The system had been endorsed by the High-level Committee on Management and the Chief Executives Board for Coordination in late 2014, and efforts were under way in 16 specialized agencies, funds and programmes to initiate or strengthen implementation of the system.

37. The organizational resilience management system embodied coordination, harmonization and integration, and prescribed collaboration among stakeholders in emergency preparedness, prevention, response and recovery. The system was a means of emergency management that built on existing capacities and mandated responsibilities of United Nations departments, funds and programmes and specialized agencies. It should not be seen as a monolithic programme or project with a start and an end. Rather, it reflected an ongoing way of doing smart business by mainstreaming emergency management components into day-to-day business. There were no costs other than those incurred in coordination.

38. The system provided key performance indicators as benchmarks for measuring progress in implementation. The indicators covered five areas: policy; governance; maintenance, exercise and review; risk management; and planning. The policy indicators assessed the availability of a policy on organizational resilience management and its promulgation, including its integrative and harmonizing characteristics, while the indicators on governance assessed whether responsibility for overseeing the production and implementation of deliverables was clear and built on existing structures. For maintenance, exercise and review, the system provided for systematic training, while experience in the management of real emergency incidents or simulation exercises were the most important sources for review and improvement of the system. Risk management covered operational risks encompassed by enterprise risk management registers. The system required risk assessments to be carried out through a holistic, systemic approach that covered security, medical and business continuity risks. Emergency plans needed to be harmonized and updated frequently to ensure that they were fit for purpose.

39. In addition to implementation of the organizational resilience management system, United

Nations Headquarters had implemented all 25 recommendations emanating from the after-action review of storm Sandy. The vulnerability of Headquarters to extensive flooding had been mitigated and the degree of preparedness greatly strengthened.

40. **Mr. Ruiz Massieu** (Chair of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions), introducing the related report of the Advisory Committee (A/70/7/Add.41), said that the Advisory Committee welcomed the progress made in applying the organizational resilience management system, based on the coordination, harmonization and integration of different components contributing to a system-wide emergency management framework. The Advisory Committee recommended that the Assembly should take note of the progress made.

41. It was important to identify costs for all activities that supported organizational resilience. Implementation of the enterprise resource planning system in United Nations entities should facilitate the identification of such costs. Efforts to assess risks related to emergency management should be coordinated with the overall risk management framework of the Organization.

42. **Ms. Wairatpanij** (Thailand), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, noting the progress in implementing the organizational resilience management system, welcomed the development of performance indicators as a tool for measuring progress. The Group noted the implementation of the system in offices away from Headquarters, regional commissions and field missions, and in the funds, programmes and specialized agencies of the United Nations system. She wished to know to what extent entities working in the same environment had harmonized and rationalized the initiative.

43. The Group noted the Secretary-General's efforts to assess and manage risks in the context of the emergency management framework, but emphasized the importance of including host countries in emergency planning at the country level.

44. Regarding the cost of implementing the organizational resilience management system, the Group recalled that, in its resolution 68/247 B, the Assembly had requested that progress reports should include a detailed accounting of the cost. It was disappointed that the current report did not fully respond to that request, and requested details of the full

cost. The Group also sought updated information on cost-sharing arrangements, including with funds and programmes, as well as on the involvement of host country authorities in implementation. Lastly, the Group would seek further information on insurance coverage pursuant to the after-action review of storm Sandy.

Agenda item 131: Financial reports and audited financial statements, and reports of the Board of Auditors (continued)

Report of the Board of Auditors on the strategic heritage plan of the United Nations Office at Geneva (A/70/569, A/70/585 and A/70/608)

Report of the Board of Auditors on progress in the handling of information and communications technology affairs in the Secretariat (A/70/581, A/70/607 and A/70/755)

45. **Mr. Mkumba** (Chair of the Audit Operations Committee of the Board of Auditors), introducing the report of the Board of Auditors on the strategic heritage plan of the United Nations Office at Geneva (A/70/569), said that the strategic heritage plan involved renovating the United Nations Office at Geneva to meet the requirements of the Organization and improve health, safety and working conditions. The report, sent to the Secretariat on 23 November 2015, was in response to the request made by the General Assembly in December 2013 for the Board to initiate oversight activities and report thereon.

46. The projected cost of the strategic heritage plan was SwF 836.5 million, or \$869.54 million. Completion was expected in 2023, with implementation in two phases: the construction of the new building, scheduled to commence in 2017 and be completed by 2019; and the renovation of the existing buildings, to be completed in 2023.

47. While the Board had no objection to the commencement of the project as proposed by the Administration, it had concerns regarding timely completion and the overall cost. The strategic heritage plan management team had attempted to take into account the lessons learned from such projects as the capital master plan, but the real test was the extent to which those lessons were applied in practice. Similarly, while the governance structure was adequate, its effectiveness would become known only later. The aggressive timelines for seeking financial approvals

and moving the project forward could challenge the Administration. Given the delays in the preliminary activities, close monitoring and a proactive approach would be required.

48. The envisaged completion of the design master plan by the lead design firm in March 2015 had been crucial as the plan defined the internal control framework, including quality assurance mechanisms, for design and construction. Completion of the evaluation of the building and in-depth site assessments, the concept or schematic design, the detailed designs for the construction of the new building, the renovation of conference building A, the protection of the historical archives against fire, the detailed cost estimates and the preparatory activity for tender documentation had also been expected in 2015. The fact that some 2015 targets had not been met could impede compliance with the project timelines and the firming-up of the cost estimates.

49. The strategic heritage plan management team had noted the lessons learned from previous projects with regard to scoping and associated costs, knowledge of local markets, the life cycle of assets, consultations with stakeholders, project manuals, risk management, change control and contingency management, but would reap the full benefits of such lessons only if they were embedded in the implementation of the project. The development of project manuals, including change controls, was important for internal control and must be expedited.

50. Some project design activities had overrun by as much as 56 days because of delays in retrieving archived documents for structural and geotechnical surveys, reviewing location information for intrusive tests, rescheduling surveys for locations initially described as inaccessible and revising the final concept design.

51. A consultant had used lump-sum estimates, based on historical local market conditions, for many costs, without a detailed supporting analysis. The allowances made for overheads, profits, consultants' fees and contingencies appeared to exceed industry standards. Although different pricing standards were used in the industry and the quantum of allowances depended on the nature of specific projects, cost estimates should be based on an established industry standard to increase transparency, objectivity and financial soundness.

52. A provisional Advisory Board had been constituted to provide independent advice on the project to the Director-General of the Office. A Steering Committee had been established to oversee the project and provide guidance on design, construction, budget and changes in scope. However, the terms of reference of the two bodies contained only preliminary information regarding their roles and responsibilities and did not define distinct mandates for them.

53. Robust internal control was needed to reduce the impact of delays of 28 days in the completion of the design master plan, 45 days in the completion of the concept design, 42 days in the start of detailed design for phase I of the new building, and 56 days in the start of detailed design for phase I of the renovation.

54. The project manual must be kept updated to enable internal control and the preparation of documentation on justifications, procedures and mechanisms for changes in the project scope, cost and schedule.

55. The Administration had confirmed to the Board that, to comply with the general principles governing procurement specified in the Financial Regulations and Rules of the United Nations and the ethical standards and responsibilities set out in the United Nations Procurement Manual, it would make provision for security instruments, including performance and payment bonds, and financial protection, including the levying of liquidated damages, in case of default. A review of ongoing contracts, however, had revealed delays in delivery of various services and no provision for liquidated damages to compensate for delays attributable to contractors. One contract deviated from the Procurement Manual by limiting the contractor's liability. The procurement actions had thus diverged from the Financial Regulations and Rules and the Procurement Manual.

56. Risk assessment and mitigation was a priority for the strategic heritage plan. The primary risks were foreign currency exposure, since two currencies were involved; maintenance of the assets created; the stringent timelines, which involved coordinated actions by various parties; scope control, contingency spending and change orders; and the preservation of artworks. The Administration had taken action in response to the Board's recommendations intended to enhance the implementation process and mitigate risks.

57. Since the issuance of the report, the General Assembly had approved the project scope, schedule and estimated cost in a maximum amount of SwF 836.5 million for the period from 2014 to 2023, and had authorized the start of the renovation and construction phases. Its resolution 70/248 reflected some of the concerns highlighted in the report. In subsequent reports on the strategic heritage plan, the Board would examine the steps taken by the Administration to address its concerns.

58. Introducing the Board's report on progress in the handling of information and communications technology (ICT) affairs in the Secretariat (A/70/581), he said that ICT was essential to supporting United Nations activities at Headquarters and in the field. For the biennium 2014-2015, the Administration estimated that, excluding Umoja, its annual ICT budget had been \$663.7 million and that it had employed an ICT workforce of nearly 4,400 people to support over 70,000 users at 376 locations.

59. The Board's first report on information and communications technology (A/67/651) had identified concerns regarding information security and had found that the Administration had failed to enforce a centralized ICT strategy, which it had been impossible to implement because the central ICT function lacked the authority to enforce change. No such strategy would succeed unless a number of managerial and structural issues were addressed.

60. Following the approval by the General Assembly in December 2014 of the revised strategy set out in the Secretary-General's report at the sixty-ninth session on ICT in the United Nations (A/69/517), the Board's current report (A/70/581) focused on the Administration's progress in addressing the Board's earlier concerns about information security and the development and implementation of the revised strategy.

61. The revised strategy, involving restructuring of the Office of Information and Communications Technology, was being implemented under the leadership of the Chief Information Technology Officer, appointed in May 2013, and represented a good initial response to the Board's 2012 report (A/67/651). The strategy focused on the standardization of policies, applications and procedures and the harmonization of support structures to establish the necessary governance, infrastructure and technical

capacity. Information security policies had been updated; regional technology centres, an enterprise data centre and a global Umoja service help desk had been established; and an application management strategy had been developed.

62. Many of the activities, however, were still in the preparatory phase and, until the managerial and structural issues identified in the Board's 2012 report were resolved, the pace of substantive change would be limited. The implementation of the strategy relied on collaboration rather than clear business rules. The Secretary-General did not expect to issue an updated bulletin setting out revised policies and procedures, including delegations of authority, until the first quarter of 2016. Agreement on which activities required strong central control and which merited operational freedom had not been reached.

63. The Administration had improved information security by deploying an intrusion detection system and updating information security policies. It had strengthened desktop and network security at Headquarters and introduced mandatory training courses, but the authority and capacity to ensure compliance with information security policies and procedures, particularly outside Headquarters, were lacking.

64. The Board could not provide assurances that the revised strategy would be implemented on schedule and within budget. Progress had been slower than the Administration had expected when it had developed its plans in 2013. The ambitious timetable adopted did not reflect an understanding of the challenges involved. Despite the Administration's confidence that it had acted within existing resources, essential budget and expenditure data for the majority of the projects underpinning the strategy were missing and the Board did not believe that the budgets and costs were adequately overseen and controlled.

65. As requested by the General Assembly, the Administration had attempted a five-year indicative ICT budget projection, but had based it on incomplete data, in particular from the Department of Field Support, which accounted for 72 per cent of ICT expenditure.

66. The Board had noted in its previous report (A/67/651) that the revised strategy must evolve over time and would not succeed without the support of heads of business units. The Secretary-General had

acknowledged that the strategy depended on clear governance, strong leadership and the optimal use of resources. Significant improvements were needed in those areas. The Administration must ensure unity of purpose by showing strong leadership and updating policies and procedures to implement the Chief Information Technology Officer's mandate. Departments must align their strategies and work plans with the revised strategy and take demonstrable action to support it.

67. With a view to implementing the strategy, the Board had made a further seven recommendations, all of which had been accepted by the Administration, one of them partially. Of the 16 recommendations made in the Board's 2012 report (A/67/651), all of which had been accepted by the Administration, two had been implemented and the remaining 14 were being implemented. The Board was satisfied, despite the issues raised in its latest report (A/70/581), that management was committed to implementing its recommendations.

68. Mr. Baez (Chief, Policy and Oversight Coordination Service), introducing the Secretary-General's report on the implementation of the recommendations of the Board of Auditors contained in its report on the strategic heritage plan of the United Nations Office at Geneva (A/70/585), said that the Administration accepted seven of the Board's eight recommendations, addressing project and change control materials, risk management, donation and voluntary contribution policies, governance and procurement, and partially agreed with the remaining one, concerning cost estimation. The Secretary-General provided further information in his report.

69. The Administration appreciated the spirit of cooperation in which the Board had conducted its audit, the overall finding that nothing prevented the approval of the project and the fact that its report had been available for consideration during the approval process.

70. Ms. Riazi (Chief Information Technology Officer), introducing the Secretary-General's report on the implementation of the recommendations of the Board of Auditors contained in its report on progress in the handling of ICT affairs in the Secretariat (A/70/607), said that the Administration had accepted all the Board's recommendations, one of them partially, for the reasons set out in the report. The audit had been

undertaken 8 months into the 60-month implementation period of the ICT strategy, before the General Assembly had considered the budget proposal. At that time, implementation had been in its formative stages, but much progress had been made since.

71. A lack of transparency in the management of ICT resources had been identified in the Board's report and during the assessment on which the strategy had been based. Although ICT budget structures and fragmentation made resource management challenging, the ongoing governance measures, the delegation of authority for ICT and the implementation of Umoja would improve visibility and decision-making.

72. The Board had noted that some components of the enterprise delivery framework, such as the enterprise data centres, enterprise application centres and regional technology centres, had not been established. Some, however, had become operational after the Board had made its assessment. The consolidation of ICT resources in an enterprise delivery framework in accordance with General Assembly resolutions 69/262 and 70/248 was a high priority.

73. The Administration acknowledged the absence of data from the Department of Field Support, mentioned previously by the Advisory Committee and by Fifth Committee members in their consideration of the implementation of the strategy. The Department of Field Support had renewed its commitment to the strategy, and a Secretariat-wide assessment of ICT would be presented at the seventy-first session.

74. The Board had again noted the tension, highlighted in its previous report (A/67/651), between operational freedom and central control in information security. The authority given to her in resolution 69/262 was being enforced and her Office had taken stricter Organization-wide measures to address the matter.

75. Governance and accountability must be enhanced and fragmentation and duplication eliminated across the Secretariat, including field missions. The instances of fragmentation identified by the Board were being addressed through consultation and institutional means rather than on a case-by-case basis.

76. She appreciated the constructive spirit in which the Board discharged its oversight function. Its contribution to the ICT strategy had been extremely

valuable and the implementation of its recommendations by her Office would improve resource management and efficiency.

77. **Mr. Ruiz Massieu** (Chair of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions), introducing the Advisory Committee's report on the report of the Board of Auditors on the strategic heritage plan of the United Nations Office at Geneva (A/70/608), said that the Advisory Committee noted the stringent project timeline and the delays in project activities. The Advisory Committee concurred with the Board's recommendation that the timelines should be met without reducing the quality and scope of deliverables.

78. The Advisory Committee agreed that the project cost estimates should be transparent and verifiable and the preliminary budget estimates updated. Its recommendation that SwF 836.5 million should be approved as the maximum overall cost of the project was subject to further reviews of annual budget performance.

79. With regard to governance, greater clarity was needed regarding the roles and responsibilities of the Steering Committee and the Advisory Board. Once the governance framework was approved by the General Assembly, any changes should be considered by the Assembly.

80. Strict compliance with United Nations regulations and rules, procurement policies and administrative procedures was needed. Continuous assurance from the Board regarding the governance framework, internal controls and management practices was essential.

81. Introducing the Advisory Committee's report on the report of the Board of Auditors on progress in the handling of ICT affairs in the Secretariat (A/70/755), he said that the Advisory Committee recommended that the General Assembly should request the Board to submit annual progress reports during the five-year implementation period of the ICT strategy. It was concerned about the lack of effective governance, management and operational arrangements. The failure to address the managerial and structural issues identified in the Board's previous report (A/67/651) was a major risk.

82. The General Assembly's requests regarding the central leadership of the Chief Information Technology

Officer and appropriate delegation of authority must be complied with without delay. The Advisory Committee recommended that the General Assembly should request the Secretary-General to expedite issuance of the relevant documents, including at least one Secretary-General's bulletin, administrative instructions and technical procedures for the Office of Information and Communications Technology. To avoid the disagreements between stakeholders described in the Board's report, which posed risks to the operations of the Organization and could result in inefficient resource use, the Secretary-General should clarify responsibilities with regard to ICT.

83. Regarding investments, ICT projects should be subject to internal vetting procedures, with proposals explicitly presented in the relevant budget documents. Initiatives with total costs above a given threshold, for example \$1 million, should be supported by a business case and information regarding resource requirements, with a level of detail commensurate with the size of the project.

84. ICT-related proposals in peacekeeping budgets should be centrally examined before submission to the Office of Programme Planning, Budget and Accounts. The Office of Information and Communications Technology should be engaged in budget preparation from the outset, providing instructions on proposals on the basis of Secretariat-wide priorities.

85. With regard to the Secretary-General's 10-point information security action plan, duplication in information security should be eliminated. All staff should complete the information security awareness training.

86. Comprehensive data relating to the indicative five-year budget projection for all Secretariat entities should be provided to the General Assembly in the Secretary-General's next report on the ICT strategy. The Secretary-General should ensure that all Secretariat entities aligned their ICT activities with the strategy, in accordance with the decisions of the General Assembly.

87. **Ms. Wairatpanij** (Thailand), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, said that the Group attached great importance to oversight of the strategic heritage plan and ICT. The comments and recommendations of the Board of Auditors and the Advisory Committee were essential to project implementation.

88. The delay between the Committee's consideration of the strategic heritage plan and the introduction of the Board's report (A/70/569) had impeded decision-making. In future, the Board's reports should be introduced when the Committee considered the strategic heritage plan. The Group took note of the Board's findings and recommendations related to activities in 2015, the delay in the project design, the lessons learned from the capital master plan and other projects, the preliminary budget and cost estimates, the governance structure, internal controls, risk management, and procurement and contracting.

89. The Group acknowledged the Administration's efforts to ensure that cost estimates were accurate and looked forward to the completion of the project within the agreed maximum cost. Voluntary contributions should be included in the total budget, and be documented and reported to the General Assembly in the Secretary-General's annual progress reports.

90. Lessons learned from other capital projects should be applied, taking into account local characteristics. The mistakes made during the capital master plan must not be repeated.

91. The Secretary-General should present detailed information regarding the scope and composition of and the technical expertise, decision-making mechanisms and functional arrangements for the governance structure, defining clear and distinct roles and responsibilities for the Steering Committee and the Advisory Board.

92. With regard to the Board's report on progress in the handling of ICT affairs in the Secretariat (A/70/581), the Board's future reports should, like its reports on the strategic heritage plan, be introduced when the Committee considered the matter. The Board's comments and recommendations remained valid despite the late introduction of the report. Those recommendations on the ICT strategy should be implemented.

93. The Board's findings in its latest report related to the standardization and harmonization of policies and procedures in various support structures; the expected benefits of the revised strategy; governance and management; information security; and the schedule and budget projection for the revised strategy. The Board's recommendations, particularly on the assessment of the expected benefits of the revised strategy, must be implemented.

94. An accurate ICT budget projection covering field offices and peacekeeping operations must be made, and assurance that the revised strategy would be implemented within budget and on schedule must be provided.

95. With regard to governance and management, further efforts must be made to address the delay in updating accountability arrangements and delegations of authority. The Group would seek information on the updating of policies to reflect the central authority of the Chief Information Technology Officer in information security.

Agenda item 140: Joint Inspection Unit (A/70/34 and A/70/716)

96. **Mr. Achamkulangare** (Chair, Joint Inspection Unit), introducing the report of the Joint Inspection Unit for 2015 and programme of work for 2016 (A/70/34), said that two significant efforts had marked the Unit's activities in 2015. On a substantive level, JIU had discharged its function as the only system-wide external oversight body, with a broad mandate for inspection, evaluation, and investigation. At the request of Member States, it had taken up complex assignments that examined the impact of United Nations system support for development objectives while maintaining its focus on improving the use of funds, as stipulated in article 5 of its statute.

97. The Unit had continued the reform of its internal procedures by strengthening quality assurance, improving management, oversight and accountability, suggesting new ways of bringing reports before legislative bodies, and producing guidelines for dealing systematically with comments from participating organizations.

98. The Unit had issued five system-wide reports, one report covering several organizations, and a series of management letters. In the near future, it would complete five more projects launched in 2015. It had strengthened its outreach and resource mobilization, enhanced its cooperation with United Nations management and oversight bodies, and undertaken two pilot projects mandated by the General Assembly for the independent system-wide evaluation of the quadrennial comprehensive policy review of the operational activities of the development system.

99. Among the system-wide reports pending issuance were a review of fraud prevention, detection and

response in the United Nations system, which had attracted the interest of Governments and oversight communities in the light of the unusually low level of fraud reported by system organizations. With regard to single-organization reports, JIU had in recent years conducted at least one management and administration review per year. The organizations reviewed had acknowledged the usefulness of its contribution.

100. The Unit had focused on the strategic and operational dimensions of the activities of participating organizations, taking into account mandates from legislative bodies, proposals from organizations and oversight bodies, and risks associated with the system as a whole. It always bore in mind the objectives of enhancing effectiveness within and improving coordination among organizations.

101. In taking on complex assignments that required research, consultation and travel, JIU was aware that resources were strained. Its participation in such assignments, in addition to acting on specific legislative requests and addressing systemic high-risk issues, was worthwhile because the Unit brought to them the unique comparative advantage of its horizontal scope.

102. To make that approach feasible despite resource pressures, JIU had limited the number of assignments it had undertaken so that it could adequately support those selected, re-examined the way in which staff and financial support were allocated, sought extrabudgetary contributions and explored ways of enhancing its capacity. It would draw to the attention of legislative bodies the resource implications of their requests. The Unit would examine the deployment of its resources by reviewing the structure of its secretariat and consulting the relevant authorities, and would report on its findings.

103. Between 2005 and 2014, the average rate of acceptance of JIU recommendations in system-wide reports and reports covering several organizations had increased to 66 per cent, while the rate for single-organization reports and notes had increased to 82 per cent. The rates of implementation of recommendations in those categories were 80 per cent and 81 per cent. The Unit was pursuing a dialogue with the five smaller organizations, which had experienced difficulties implementing the recommendations in the system-wide reports.

104. The web-based tracking system for monitoring the acceptance and implementation of JIU recommendations had proved valuable. In response to General Assembly resolution 69/275, JIU had developed indicators of achievement to measure how the system had improved tracking, but support for the upgrading and maintenance of the system remained a challenge. The consideration by the Secretary-General of options for hosting the JIU website in-house, as requested by the Assembly in its resolution 70/247, was an opportunity to resolve the matter and improve the institutional arrangements of the system.

105. Ensuring that the legislative and governing bodies and the executive heads of participating organizations followed up on JIU findings and recommendations remained a challenge. The Unit would engage in dialogue with organizations throughout the preparation of reports and notes, and would facilitate legislative decisions by ensuring that recommendations were practical, actionable and trackable.

106. The seven projects in the programme of work for 2016 had been selected through consultation and addressed system-wide issues from a strategic, risk-based perspective. They covered administrative service delivery, knowledge management, travel policies, donor-led accountability and oversight, support for small island developing States, and the management and administration of two entities, and represented a balance between system-wide and single-organization reviews with varying degrees of complexity.

107. The year 2016 marked the fiftieth anniversary of the founding of JIU. The Unit was committed to serving as the only system-wide independent external oversight mechanism and to meeting the requirements of the legislative and governing bodies of participating organizations while working closely with their executive heads. It would fulfil its mandate to enhance effectiveness and support coordination among the organizations, and would adapt to such new priorities as the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

108. Four inspectors had left JIU at the end of 2015. With their replacements, the new composition included three women, the largest number ever.

109. **Mr. Herman** (United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination), introducing the Secretary-General's note on the report of JIU for 2015 (A/70/716), said that the note had been prepared

pursuant to General Assembly resolution 65/270, requesting the Secretary-General, as Chair of the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB), to expedite the implementation of the resolution and support JIU.

110. CEB was dedicated to helping JIU perform its critical function in the United Nations system. Each year, as the Unit prepared its programme of work, CEB helped solicit suggestions from agencies and suggested topics that JIU might wish to consider.

111. CEB and its secretariat compiled the Secretary-General's notes transmitting his comments and those of CEB on system-wide JIU reports, notes that reflected the views of all system organizations. CEB worked closely with the Unit in the preparation of reports, thereby contributing to a more substantive outcome, and of the JIU programme of work. In consequence, collaboration between CEB and the Unit had intensified, while the dialogue between the CEB and JIU secretariats had furthered their collective efforts to ensure that the system worked as one. The Secretary-General would work more closely with JIU to monitor and follow up on the implementation of its system-wide recommendations.

112. At the request of the Committee, JIU had focused on system-wide issues, as reflected in the results achieved in 2015 and the 2016 programme of work. As JIU implemented its strategic framework for 2010-2019 and increased its system-wide focus, the strain on the limited resources of the CEB secretariat would continue.

113. **Mr. Chamlongrasdr** (Thailand), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, said that the Group attached great importance to the work of JIU. The Group was concerned that the Unit's budget submission process did not comply with article 20 of its statute, which could affect its operational independence.

114. The Unit assisted the legislative organs of participating organizations in overseeing resource management and helped their secretariats achieve the mandates and objectives of the organizations. Legislative organs should discuss JIU reports and secretariats should implement accepted recommendations.

115. The Group welcomed the willingness of JIU to adapt to new priorities, including the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. In particular, it welcomed

the pilot projects for evaluation in the context of the quadrennial policy review of the operational activities of the development system, and the concrete application of the Unit's mandate to examine the impact of support by the United Nations system for development objectives, in addition to the traditional focus on management, methods and efficient use of funds.

116. The Unit should improve its internal working procedures, develop a biennial work-planning cycle and implement peer review recommendations on the resource mobilization strategy, outreach and internal expertise.

117. The upgrading and maintenance of the web-based tracking system to monitor the acceptance and implementation of JIU recommendations remained a challenge. The request in General Assembly resolution 70/247 for the Secretary-General to consider options for hosting the JIU website in-house was an opportunity to resolve the matter.

118. The Group welcomed the fact that the seven new projects in the programme of work for 2016 addressed system-wide issues from a strategic and risk-based perspective. The Group would address the scope and objectives of the projects to ensure balance between system-wide and single-organization reviews.

119. Lastly, the recent improvement in the gender balance of the Unit must continue.

120. **Ms. Norman Chalet** (United States of America) said that JIU was essential to the efficient functioning of the United Nations system; her delegation welcomed its efforts to improve its working methods and conduct system-wide reviews. The Unit should continue refining its indicators to help decision-making by Member States.

121. She looked forward to the Unit's recommendations on travel policies, and its work on anti-fraud policies. As travel was the second largest expense of system organizations, efficient use of resources was required. Given the resource constraints noted in the report, JIU should mobilize resources and optimize their use to achieve its objectives.

The meeting rose at 12.30 p.m.



General Assembly

Seventieth session

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Summary record of the 25th meeting

Held at Headquarters, New York, on Friday, 4 March 2016, at 10 a.m.

Chair: Mr. Bhattarai (Chair) (Nepal)
*Chair of the Advisory Committee on Administrative
and Budgetary Questions:* Mr. Ruiz Massieu

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The meeting was called to order at 10.15 a.m.

Agenda item 134: Programme budget for the biennium 2016-2017 (continued)

Managing after-service health insurance liabilities (A/70/7/Add.42 and A/70/590)

1. **Mr. Guazo** (Director, Accounts Division), introducing the report of the Secretary-General on managing after-service health insurance liabilities (A/70/590), said that, by its resolution 68/244, the General Assembly had requested the Secretary-General to examine the option of broadening the mandate of the United Nations Joint Staff Pension Fund, based on input from the United Nations Joint Staff Pension Board, to include the administration of after-service health insurance benefits, taking into account the associated advantages and disadvantages, as well as to undertake a survey of current health-care plans for active and retired staff of the United Nations system, and explore options for increasing efficiency and containing costs.
2. The report provided, for the first time, a comprehensive overview of the number and type of United Nations system health insurance plans and related methods of administration, annual costs and numbers of persons insured, based on the analysis of a working group established by the Finance and Budget Network of the High-level Committee on Management of the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB). In addition to CEB, the Working Group comprised representatives of the Human Resources Network of the High-level Committee on Management, 16 United Nations system agencies, the United Nations Joint Staff Pension Fund, and the Federation of Associations of Former International Civil Servants (FAFICS) and Federation of International Civil Servants' Associations (FICSA).
3. There were 23 insurance plans, covering 401,166 internationally and nationally recruited active and retired staff and their dependants system-wide. In 2014 the cost of benefits under those plans had amounted to \$731.7 million, representing 1.7 per cent of the total assessed and voluntary contributions received by the United Nations system. Administrative expenditures represented approximately 6 per cent of total costs, a low figure compared with industry benchmarks.
4. The Working Group had proposed eight recommendations to improve health insurance

management. In recommendations 1, 2, 3 and 8, the Working Group encouraged system entities to collectively negotiate contracts with third-party administrators, health-care providers, insurers and asset managers. In recommendation 4, it underscored the need to secure access, where possible, by retirees and their dependants to national health insurance schemes. In recommendation 5, the Working Group indicated that, although the mandate of the United Nations Joint Staff Pension Fund should not be broadened, the Pension Fund should be requested to share its best practice approach and methods for centralization and administration of a complex multi-employer plan. In recommendation 6, the Working Group proposed the standardization of the general valuation methodology for after-service health insurance liabilities across all system organizations. Lastly, in recommendation 7, it highlighted the need for organizations to adequately fund after-service health insurance liabilities, which had totalled \$16.1 billion in 2014, although it did not propose a specific funding plan for the liability of the United Nations Secretariat.

5. The Secretary-General invited the General Assembly to welcome and take note of his report, particularly the analysis regarding any potential role for the Pension Fund in after-service health insurance; to endorse recommendations 1 to 8 by the Working Group; and to request him to maintain the Working Group for the purpose of examining further options for increasing efficiency and containing costs, and to put forward specific proposals regarding those matters at the seventy-first session.

6. **Mr. Ruiz Massieu** (Chair of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions), introducing the related report of the Advisory Committee (A/70/7/Add.42), said that the Assembly should endorse recommendations 1 to 3 by the Working Group, calling for a collective approach to dealing with third-party administrators, health-care providers and insurers. Notwithstanding the barriers posed by the diversity of health insurance plans and operating models across the system, opportunities existed for consolidation with a view to achieving economies and efficiencies while maintaining access to high quality health care. Although the implementation of recommendation 4, that participants should be required to participate in national health insurance plans in addition to their United Nations plans, could

achieve savings, the Advisory Committee was not in a position to recommend its endorsement until it received more information about national health insurance plans in the countries of residence of United Nations retirees.

7. While not in a position to recommend the endorsement of recommendation 5 by the Working Group, against broadening the role of the Pension Fund, the Advisory Committee recognized the Fund's potential role in sharing its best practices and operating methods, should United Nations organizations take a system-wide approach to after-service health insurance coverage. The Advisory Committee recommended the endorsement of recommendation 6, calling for standardization of the general valuation methodology for liabilities across all organizations, and expected every effort to be made to implement it. With regard to recommendation 7, regarding funding of after-service health insurance liabilities, the pay-as-you-go approach should be continued, as it was still considered a viable option by the General Assembly. Lastly, the Advisory Committee was not in a position to recommend the endorsement of recommendation 8, on leveraging existing arrangements with external asset managers, as no decision pertaining to that recommendation had been taken by the General Assembly.

8. **The Chair**, on an exceptional basis and without setting a precedent, invited a representative of FAFICS to make a statement.

9. **Ms. Saputelli** (Federation of Associations of Former International Civil Servants) said that FAFICS, acting on behalf of 58 member associations, represented the interests of tens of thousands of retirees from across the United Nations system. As health insurance was of critical importance to retirees, FAFICS members had a direct interest in ensuring the sound financing and management of after-service health insurance schemes.

10. Continuing access to health insurance for retired staff previously enrolled in staff health insurance schemes for a significant period was a common feature of United Nations health insurance arrangements that was of particular importance to expatriate staff. The cost of after-service health insurance was shared between the former employer and the retiree; former staff therefore had significant acquired rights to after-service coverage under United Nations system plans, and FAFICS expected the principle of

intergenerational equity to be respected in the context of future reviews of health insurance schemes.

11. FAFICS supported the intent behind the recommendations relating to negotiations with third-party administrators, targeted at cost containment and value for money, as participants in after-service health insurance schemes contributed to premiums and would benefit from the resulting cost efficiencies. However, cost containment measures should not be adopted at the expense of the quality of health care offered. The recommendation that consideration should be given to the use of national health insurance schemes in conjunction with United Nations schemes also had the limited concurrence of the Federation, on the understanding that national health insurance plans and the relevant national legislation must be evaluated on a case-by-case basis to ensure that the current quality of health care was fully maintained. Regarding broadening the mandate of the Pension Fund to cover health insurance matters, FAFICS was convinced that no benefit would be derived, although best practices could be shared.

12. FAFICS supported the harmonization of the methodology for valuing health insurance liabilities under the auspices of the Task Force on Accounting Standards. The recommendation on adequate funding of ASHI liabilities was particularly important. Organizations applying a pay-as-you-go basis should move to a pay-as-you-accrue basis as being fully consistent with the International Public Sector Accounting Standards and enhancing organizations' ability to meet their obligation to provide health benefits to serving and former staff. In that regard, steps should be taken to ensure that existing unfunded liabilities were financed and unfunded liabilities did not increase. Lastly, FAFICS supported the recommendation to use external assets managers, as well-managed investment arrangements would ultimately result in lower insurance premiums for retirees and organizations, provided that efforts to maximize returns did not expose reserves to undue risk.

13. **Mr. Chamlongrasdr** (Thailand), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, noted that many staff could not benefit from national social security schemes. The Group attached great importance to staff welfare, including in connection with the settlement of end-of-service liabilities and after-service health insurance. Given the long-term implications of

after-service health insurance for Member States and staff, a holistic and sustainable solution that drew on common international practice needed to be adopted, particularly with regard to funding mechanisms and investment. A system-wide approach should be taken to the funding and administration of after-service health insurance benefits.

14. Noting that the growth in the aggregate after-service health insurance liability from \$12.1 billion in 2012 to \$16.1 billion in 2014 was primarily attributable to the fall in the discount rates used in the liability valuations by some two percentage points, the Group concurred with the Advisory Committee that the general valuation methodology should be standardized and that key after-service health insurance liability valuation factors should be established system-wide. The Group also agreed regarding the existence of opportunities for consolidating the diversity of health insurance plans across the United Nations system with a view to achieving financial and operational economies and efficiencies. Lastly, the Group would seek further information on elements outlined in the Secretary-General's report (A/70/590) pertaining to funding of after-service health insurance liabilities, investment of reserves, the mandate of the Pension Fund and the Working Group's recommendations.

Agenda item 139: Human resources management
(A/70/135, A/70/229, A/70/253, A/70/254, A/70/307, A/70/605, A/70/718, A/70/728, A/70/764, A/70/765, A/70/685 and A/70/685/Add.1)

15. **Ms. Wainaina** (Assistant Secretary-General for Human Resources Management), introducing the Secretary-General's report on the composition of the Secretariat: staff demographics (A/70/605), said that the report provided an analysis of Secretariat staff demographics from 1 July 2014 to 30 June 2015. The net decrease of 345 staff in the Secretariat from 2014 to 2015 reflected a decrease of 579 staff in the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID) and a collective decrease of 1,656 staff in 29 other entities, offset by a combined increase of 1,890 staff in 46 entities. From 2011 to 2015, the percentage of staff holding a permanent or continuing appointment had increased from 16 per cent to 23 per cent, while the percentage of staff holding a fixed-term appointment had decreased from 79 per cent to 71 per cent, figures that reflected the one-time conversion to

permanent appointments and the first continuing appointment exercise. Lastly, female staff as a percentage of total staff had increased from 33 per cent to 34.4 per cent and the average age of staff had increased from 42.3 to 44.2 years of age. The Secretary-General proposed that, starting in 2017, data on the composition of the Secretariat should be reported for the calendar year of 1 January to 31 December, with a cut-off date of 15 March of the following year, to allow him to provide the additional analysis requested by the General Assembly in paragraphs 13 and 17 of its resolution 68/252.

16. Introducing the Secretary-General's report on the amendments to the Staff Regulations and Rules (A/70/135), she said that the Secretary-General proposed a comprehensive revision of appendix D to the Staff Rules, governing compensation in the event of death, injury or illness attributable to the performance of official duties on behalf of the United Nations, as well as slight amendments to rule 4.15, for the purpose of implementing the new managed mobility framework for senior staff. In addition, an amendment was proposed to rule 5.3 (d) to reflect the changes made to article 29 of the Regulations of the United Nations Joint Staff Pension Fund, which introduced an early retirement age of 58 for staff members joining the Pension Fund on or after 1 January 2014. The amended rule would cover staff members eligible for early retirement at age 55 or 58. Lastly, rule 9.9 would be amended to indicate that annual leave normally payable at the time of separation would not be payable to a staff member dismissed for sexual exploitation or abuse.

17. Introducing the Secretary-General's report on mobility (A/70/254), she said that the report provided an update on progress made by July 2015 towards the implementation of the new staff selection and managed mobility system, in addition to further data and information requested by the General Assembly. It should be underscored that the concept of managed mobility, while critical to the Organization's talent management objectives, was only one element of the new system. The report also contained a proposal to reduce the advertising time for vacancies posted as part of the forthcoming semi-annual staffing exercises from 60 to 30 days in order to bolster progress towards achieving the 120-day target for recruitment set by the General Assembly.

18. The political, peace and humanitarian network (POLNET) had been the first job network to adopt the legislative framework for the new system, effective 1 January 2016. A network staffing team for POLNET had been established and the staffing processes outlined in the report (A/70/254) implemented. Evaluation of candidates had begun for the first managed mobility exercise for POLNET staff, launched in January 2016, and preparations were under way for the first vacancy exercise, due to launch in April 2016. The third annual report on mobility would reflect the outcomes of the first semi-annual staffing exercise and would allow the Committee to examine the results of the initiative and identify areas for improvement.

19. Introducing the Secretary-General's report on seconded active-duty military and police personnel (A/70/229), she said that the report had been prepared in response to the request contained in paragraph 31 of General Assembly resolution 68/252, extending for a further three years the exceptional measures authorized by its resolution 67/287. Despite its repeated requests to Member States for information on potential conflicts between their national legislation and the United Nations Staff Regulations and Rules that might affect the contractual obligations of seconded active-duty military and police personnel, the Secretariat had received limited responses. The report described two cases in which active-duty officers seconded to the United Nations had continued to receive remuneration from their Governments, in accordance with the exceptional measure authorized in General Assembly resolutions 67/287 and 68/252.

20. Introducing the Secretary-General's report on practice in disciplinary matters and cases of possible criminal behaviour during the period from 1 July 2014 to 30 June 2015 (A/70/253), she said that the report had been prepared pursuant to General Assembly resolution 59/287. Chapter II of the report included an overview of the legislative framework governing the investigative and disciplinary processes, while chapter III contained a summary of cases in which the Secretary-General had imposed disciplinary measures during the reporting period. Chapter IV provided statistics on the numbers and types of cases received by the Office of Human Resources Management during the reporting period, the number of cases completed and the disposition of completed cases, as well as information on the outcome of appeals against

disciplinary measures since the introduction of the new system of justice in 2009. Chapter V provided information on cases in which the Organization had informed Member States of proven misconduct and/or criminal behaviour.

21. Lastly, she drew the Committee's attention to the overview report on human resources management reform deferred from the Assembly's sixty-ninth session (A/69/190) and related addenda, and looked forward to presenting a new comprehensive report on the Secretary-General's reforms in the area of human resources at the Assembly's seventy-first session.

22. **Ms. Armstrong** (Director, Ethics Office), introducing the report of the Secretary-General on the activities of the Ethics Office between 1 August 2014 and 31 July 2015 (A/70/307), said that the Office had responded to 980 requests for services, including 533 confidential ethics advice requests; reviewed 5,043 confidential disclosure statements as part of its financial disclosure programme; facilitated the Secretariat's second leadership dialogue; and conducted 15 preliminary reviews in connection with the Organization's policy on protection against retaliation, in addition to providing advice on related requests.

23. The Office continued to enhance the Organization's culture of ethics, transparency and accountability by holding induction briefings and maintaining the voluntary public financial disclosure initiative for senior officials in order to promote an ethical "tone at the top"; administering the annual financial disclosure exercise; reviewing complaints of retaliation for protected activities such as reporting wrongdoing and cooperating with authorized audits or investigations; providing confidential ethics advice; and conducting outreach and developing training and briefings, including a new online mandatory ethics awareness training programme, in cooperation with the Office of Human Resources Management and various Secretariat departments.

24. The Ethics Office's key role in administering the annual financial disclosure programme, with a compliance rate of 100 per cent for the 2014 cycle, contributed to ensuring that the discharge of staff duties was not influenced by personal interest or external affiliation that would involve conflicts of interest. The Office had completed an internal review of the regulatory framework for the programme in

2014 and made recommendations to strengthen its governing policy. An inter-departmental working group, established in 2015, had identified areas for improvement and would submit recommendations to the Secretary-General. The Office encouraged those senior officials who had not disclosed a summary of their assets under the 2014 voluntary public disclosure exercise to do so.

25. With regard to outreach, the Office continued to reach out to as many staff as possible; there was a direct correlation between its outreach services and use by staff of its confidential advisory services, which were essential to preventing, mitigating and managing ethical and reputational risks concerning the Organization. Similarly, the annual leadership dialogues demonstrated the Organization's commitment to ethics education at the highest levels. In that connection, the Office was contributing to the development of a discussion guide on fraud awareness and prevention for the 2016 leadership dialogue to ensure that reporting and advisory mechanisms in cases of alleged misconduct were clear to all staff.

26. On the basis of an external expert review and reflecting best practice, the Office, in collaboration with the Department of Management, the Office of Legal Affairs and the Office of Internal Oversight Services, had revised the policy on protection against retaliation to reflect a focus on the reporting of misconduct that posed harm to the operations, governance and interests of the Organization.

27. Lastly, the ongoing collaboration among members of the Ethics Panel of the United Nations ensured the coherent and consistent application of ethical standards in the Secretariat and the funds and programmes. By engaging directly with staff and other stakeholders in support of the principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations and promoting adherence to high standards of efficiency, competency and integrity, the Office provided critical support to the Secretary-General and Member States.

28. **Mr. Ruiz Massieu** (Chair of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions), introducing the report of the Advisory Committee on human resources management (A/70/718), said that the Advisory Committee was not fully convinced of the need to remove the provision on term limits for members of central review bodies from rule 4.15 of the Staff Regulations and Rules, and

recommended that the Secretary-General should provide additional justification for the proposal.

29. The Advisory Committee welcomed the proposed amendment to staff rule 9.9 to ensure that accrued annual leave would not be paid to staff dismissed for sexual exploitation; in his next report the Secretary-General should include a proposal to broaden the scope of the amendment to cover other types of serious misconduct. Noting the increase in the number of disciplinary cases during the 2015 reporting period compared with the two previous reporting periods, the Advisory Committee regretted that a revised administrative instruction on investigations and the disciplinary process had not yet been issued.

30. With regard to the Ethics Office, the Advisory Committee welcomed the efforts to provide explanatory details of reporting and advisory mechanisms in cases of alleged wrongdoing and underscored the need to ensure that such mechanisms were clear to all United Nations personnel. Lastly, the Secretary-General should encourage those senior officials who had not disclosed their assets under the voluntary financial disclosure initiative to do so.

31. Introducing the report of the Advisory Committee on mobility (A/70/765), he said that the Advisory Committee recommended approval of the Secretary-General's proposal to reduce from 60 to 30 days the advertising time for vacancies posted as part of the semi-annual staff exercises under the mobility and career development framework. A comparative baseline against which future mobility trends could be measured should be established for the General Assembly's consideration no later than at the main part of its seventy-first session. The Secretary-General should provide more information on mobility data, including on staff in hardship duty stations and on the lessons learned from the first managed mobility exercise implemented by POLNET.

32. Introducing the report of the Advisory Committee on seconded active-duty military and police personnel (A/70/728), he said that the Advisory Committee recommended approval of the actions requested by the Secretary-General, including the extension for up to three years of the application of the exceptional measures authorized by the General Assembly in its resolutions 67/287 and 68/252.

33. Introducing the report of the Advisory Committee on the composition of the Secretariat: staff

demographics (A/70/764), he said that, while the Advisory Committee did not object to the proposed change in the reporting cycle and the cut-off date for the demographic data included in the composition report, the data for the six-month transitional period from July to December 2016 should be reflected in the report to be submitted to the Assembly at its seventy-second session in a format that facilitated comparison with past and future periods. The General Assembly should request the Secretary-General to include an analysis and explanation of the possible reasons for certain trends, including the impact of recent human resources reforms, in future reports.

34. The upward shift in the grade structure of the Secretariat remained a matter of concern. Rather than enabling the Organization to respond more effectively to the mounting demands it faced, the increased concentration of staff in senior positions could lead to fragmentation of leadership responsibilities and diffused accountability. The Advisory Committee expected a review of existing functions and structures to be undertaken before proposals for high-level positions were presented, to minimize possible overlap in functional responsibilities at the senior level of the Organization. In that connection, the General Assembly should request the Secretary-General to explain his policy on senior appointments in his next overview report on human resources management reform. The Advisory Committee also expected the guidelines concerning appointments on one-dollar-per-year contracts to be issued without further delay, as requested by the General Assembly in its resolution 67/255, and to be routinely informed of appointments. Lastly, the Advisory Committee expected a fully developed strategy for the development of a robust workforce planning system to be included in the next overview report on human resources management reform for the timely consideration of the General Assembly.

35. **Mr. Achamkulangare** (Chair, Joint Inspection Unit), introducing the note by the Secretary-General transmitting the report of the Joint Inspection Unit (JIU) on the use of non-staff personnel and related contractual modalities in the United Nations system organizations (A/70/685), said that the report provided an assessment of the use of non-staff personnel, including policies, regulations, contractual practices and associated managerial processes, in United Nations system organizations. Around 45 per cent of the

system's workforce worked under non-staff contracts, performing administrative, technical, project-related and managerial functions for extended periods in a de facto employment relationship, a phenomenon that had resulted in a workforce divided between personnel with full entitlements and personnel with limited entitlements. While non-staff contracts offered administrative flexibility and cost efficiency, such practical advantages should not override the obligation of organizations to uphold the values embodied by the United Nations and to adhere to good labour practices.

36. Organizations had developed policies and contractual modalities for the use of non-staff personnel in a fragmented manner, owing to the absence of overarching, system-wide criteria. In addition, the lack of analytical data on the use of non-staff and, in particular, on the profile and final cost of the non-staff workforce, undermined the effectiveness of decision-making and of monitoring, internal controls and the support and oversight provided by headquarters departments. The inappropriate use of non-staff personnel also contributed to increased reputational risk, high turnover, a lack of stable and motivated personnel and an increased risk of legal action against organizations. A working group, akin to the International Civil Service Commission, should be established under the High-level Committee on Management for the purpose of harmonizing non-staff policies and practices across the system.

37. Organizations should review the long-term use of non-staff personnel and establish short-to-medium-term plans to terminate the practice; the plans should include an assessment of the financial resources required for implementation and provisions to enable long-serving non-staff personnel to apply for vacant staff positions as internal candidates. Following approval by legislative and governing bodies, changes should be made to the relevant rules and regulations. Organizations needed guidelines on the use of non-staff personnel to guide managers' decision-making so as to minimize the confusion and inefficiencies arising from the use of multiple types of non-staff contracts, and should adopt a single contractual modality for non-staff personnel, following the example of the International Labour Organization. Executive heads must ensure that third-party contractors had decent working conditions.

38. Non-staff personnel were as essential an asset as staff, and should have access to internal justice mechanisms, including mediation, the Ethics Office, the Office of the Ombudsman and other informal conflict resolution mechanisms. In addition, they should be covered by policies on whistle-blowing and the prevention of harassment.

39. **Mr. Herman** (United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination), introducing the note by the Secretary-General transmitting his comments and those of CEB on the JIU report (A/70/685/Add.1), said that the report made a valuable contribution to analysis of the use of non-staff modalities by United Nations organizations, although the broad use of the term "non-staff personnel" to refer to a variety of personnel categories and contractual modalities complicated analysis of the use of such arrangements. For some organizations the use of non-staff contracts allowed for greater agility and flexibility in staffing and was particularly important for providing surge capacity in the context of humanitarian operations. Organizations with voluntary funding models often used non-staff arrangements as they were unable to make long-term staffing commitments owing to the unpredictability of their funding.

40. Organizations noted the benefit of providing non-staff contract holders with appropriate conditions of service, including insurance. Many of the recommendations presented in the report offered a constructive approach to the challenges posed by non-staff arrangements. Organizations particularly welcomed recommendation 4 on the strengthening of internal monitoring and oversight through enhanced information systems, and recommendation 8 on the need to promote gender balance. However, the financial impact that would result from the adoption of recommendation 3 on terminating the long-term use of non-staff personnel made it difficult to implement. Organizations were also concerned about recommendation 7 on the working conditions of third-party contractors, as they had limited ability to influence the salaries and social entitlements of third parties.

41. **The Chair**, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 35/213, invited a representative of the Staff-Management Committee to make a statement.

42. **Mr. Richards** (Staff-Management Committee), speaking on behalf of the staff unions of the United

Nations, said, regarding the Secretary-General's proposals in the overview report on human resources management reform introduced at the sixty-ninth session (A/69/190), that the proposal to extend the time limit for temporary appointments from one year to two years was at odds with the purpose of temporary appointments, which were limited in duration in order to incentivize managers to reappoint high-performing staff needed for longer than a year through the staff selection system, subject to gender and geographical diversity requirements. Rather, steps should be taken to ensure that temporary staff received the same pay and entitlements as other staff.

43. The United Nations staff unions supported the proposal to allow performance reports covering periods of less than one year to count towards eligibility for continuing appointments. With regard to staff selection, the reported average time of 213 days required to fill a vacancy did not reflect the interval between the post becoming vacant and the advertising of the vacancy, during which managers often filled posts temporarily for extended periods, a practice that undermined career development and morale, particularly for entry-level staff. The method of measuring vacancy periods should be reviewed.

44. The staff unions had developed a number of proposals on revision of the performance management framework to promote greater flexibility in the composition of rebuttal panels and more clarity with regard to performance improvement plans. The Staff-Management Committee was developing proposals to promote ongoing feedback from supervisors to staff members, necessary for good performance.

45. The troubled climate at the United Nations Joint Staff Pension Fund, as evidenced by the repeated attempts of its Chief Executive Officer to disassociate the Fund from the United Nations, low staff morale, retaliation against whistle-blowers and the chaos that had characterized the Pension Board's 2015 meeting, should be addressed as a matter of priority. The six-month delay in the pay-out of first pension payments to new retirees was particularly unacceptable. While the Secretary-General had placed the Chief Executive Officer on a performance improvement plan with orders to reduce the payment backlog from six months to zero by 31 May 2016, the staff unions called for his prompt replacement. With regard to staff well-being, the fact that 40 per cent of the disability pensions awarded by the Pension Fund

were based on a mental health diagnosis, compared with the worldwide percentage of 25 per cent, reflected the significant stress endured by staff serving in hardship duty stations. In that regard, he called for the restoration of accelerated home leave for staff serving in category C duty stations, and, in recognition of the global mobility of candidates, for the discontinuation of the requirement for staff members to renounce permanent resident status in a country outside their country of nationality on joining the Organization.

46. With regard to the Secretary-General's report on the activities of the Ethics Office (A/70/307), the inadequate focus on whistle-blower protection was a matter of concern. In particular, the refusal to grant judicial review to whistle-blowers denied protection from retaliation ran counter to the recommendation made by Judge Louise Otis of Canada in her related report, the judgment of the United Nations Dispute Tribunal in *Nguyen-Kropp Postica v. Secretary-General of the United Nations*, and the findings of the independent panel on sexual exploitation and abuse by international peacekeeping forces in the Central African Republic, which had highlighted weaknesses in the independence of the Ethics Office.

47. With regard to the Secretary-General's report on the amendments to the Staff Regulations and Rules (A/70/135), the proposal to deny payment of accrued annual leave to staff members dismissed for sexual exploitation or abuse was an arbitrary penalty that would be ineffective in deterring such misconduct. It should be rejected in favour of a comprehensive policy proposal for the prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse, currently under consideration by the Staff-Management Committee. Lastly, the Organization's practice of offering unpaid internships denied it access to a broad pool of talent from developing countries: only 42 per cent of United Nations interns originated from non-Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development member countries, which represented 82 per cent of the world's population. The practice also contravened international labour standards. The Secretary-General should examine the possibility of providing interns with stipends, drawing on the practices of specialized agencies.

48. **Ms. Wairatpanij** (Thailand), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, underscored the essential role of United Nations staff, the most important asset of the Organization, many of whom risked their lives to ensure the effective and efficient

delivery of the Organization's mandates. The Group attached great importance to the issues raised in the Secretary-General's reports on the management of human resources, and was concerned at the delay in the issuance of the relevant documentation, particularly the Secretary-General's report on the amendments to the Staff Regulations and Rules (A/70/135).

49. Equitable geographical representation in the Secretariat must be ensured by increasing the proportion of staff from developing countries, including women, particularly at senior levels, as well as by enhancing the transparency of the recruitment process and ensuring effective workforce planning. Implementation of global mandates required a truly global Secretariat. The Group would seek further information on the first managed mobility exercise and the impact of the policy on opportunities for external candidates and on hardship duty stations. It would also monitor the costs of the managed mobility framework and the number of geographical moves planned for 2016.

50. The Group would examine the Secretary-General's proposal to revise the performance management system, bearing in mind the need for transparent and quantifiable benchmarks to encourage performance, skills development and talent retention. Lastly, efforts should be undertaken to address the proliferation of senior level positions in the Secretariat in order to avoid duplication and overlap of functions while ensuring effective mandate delivery.

51. **Mr. Conroy** (United States of America) said that human resources management reforms must focus on ensuring that the Organization had an adaptable, integrated, field-oriented and global workforce to achieve its strategic objectives. He encouraged continued implementation of the reforms currently under way, particularly the new mobility policy, which would enable staff to acquire diverse skills and experience, and looked forward to updates on its implementation. To ensure mandate delivery, the Organization must establish a robust performance management framework designed to identify potential, reward good performance and address underperformance.

52. As recognized by the Secretary-General, much remained to be done in terms of workforce and succession planning to ensure that human capital was aligned with mandate requirements and that critical

human resources policy objectives, such as the enhancement of gender diversity, were fulfilled. He commended the Ethics Office on its work in the areas of outreach, training and education, procurement ethics and financial disclosure and looked forward to the finalization of the policy on protection against retaliation for whistle-blowers.

53. **Mr. Chung Byung-ha** (Republic of Korea) said that the human resources management framework must be aimed at recruiting the most qualified candidates and harnessing the full potential of staff, the Organization's most valuable asset, to respond to the international community's pressing needs in a flexible manner. He welcomed the timely implementation of the managed mobility framework, which would enhance the Organization's capacity to adapt to a rapidly changing international environment by facilitating the strategic deployment of staff.

The meeting rose at 11.35 a.m.